ONTARIO
ADVISORY COUNCIL
ON WOMEN'S ISSUES

CONSEIL CONSULTATIF
DE L'ONTARIO SUR LA
CONDITION FÉMININE

880 rue Bay Street, 5th floor/5e étage, Toronto, Ontario, M7A 1N3 (416) 326-1840 Fax/Télécopieur: (416) 326-1836 TDD/ATM: (416) 326-1835

91-06893/

CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS:

MOTHERHOOD IN A CHANGING SOCIETY

June 9, 10, & 11, 1988

ONTARIO ADVISORY COUNCIL ON WOMEN'S ISSUES
CONSEIL CONSULTATIF DE L'ONTARIO SUR LA CONDITION FÉMININE
880 Bay Street 5th Floor 5ème etage Toronto Ontario M7A 1N3 (416) 965-6824

October 26, 1988

Dear Friends:

On June 9, 10 & 11, 1988 the Ontario Advisory Council on Women's Issues hosted a conference on motherhood. Over the three days, more than 500 people came to hear a debate on feminism and the family, and presentations that ranged in topic from housework to artificial insemination.

The object of the conference was three-fold: (1) to examine current issues associated with motherhood, (2) to demonstrate that feminism benefits all women including the stay-at-home mothers, and (3) to provide an arena for discussion of the issues.

We hope you will use these transcripts to generate discussion among your friends, co-workers and members of your community.

We welcome your comments.

Sincerely,

Sandra Kerr

Sandra Kerr
President

Encl.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

Sandra Kerr,
Acting President
Oakville

Danielle Coulombe
Hearst

Bernice Dubec
Thunder Bay

Dianne Harkin
Winchester

Sandra Manzig
Windsor

Susan McDonald
Arva

Ceta Ramkhalawansingh
Toronto

Anne Rochon Ford
Toronto

STAFF

Bridget Vianna
Executive Officer

Elayne Ceifets
Policy Advisor

Lydia Oleksyn
Communications Officer

Rita Kelly
Administrative Assistant

Melody CarvalhoMount
Secretary

CONTENTS **PAGE**

THURSDAY JUNE 9, 1988

Opening Remarks, Sandra Kerr 1

Debate

Moderator's Comments, Sarah Band 4

Presentation:
For the Resolution, Marjorie Cohen 6
Against the Resolution, Betty Steele 10
For the Resolution, Sheila Copps 13
Against the Resolution, Gwen Landolt 17

Rebuttal:
Against the Resolution, Betty Steele and Gwen Landolt 21
For the Resolution, Marjorie Cohen and Sheila Copps 23

Closing Remarks, Sandra Kerr 25

FRIDAY JUNE 10, 1988

Opening Remarks, Susan McDonald 26

Welcome, Honourable Gregory Sorbara, Minister Responsible for Women's Issues 28

Key-note Address
Introduction of Key-note Speaker 35
Key-note Speaker, Bernice Martin, Ph.d. 36

Panel: **Society's Views of Motherhood**

Jean Augustine, Education 51
Judy Posner, Media 54
Manon Vennat, Workplace 60
Harriet Rosenberg, Culture 66
Lois Wilson, Religion 67

Discussion with the Audience 73

CONTENTS **PAGE**

Panel: **The Issue of Infertility**

Rona Achilles,
What Are New Reproductive Technologies 77
Jan Silverman,
The Drive to Have Children 83
Linda Williams,
Biology or Society: Women and IVF 88

Discussion with the Audience 94

Closing Remarks, Susan McDonald 100

SATURDAY JUNE 11, 1988

Opening Remarks, Sandra Kerr 101

Panel: **The Economic Value of Homemakers and Housework**

Maureen Kellerman,
Social Value of Homemakers 105
Kathleen Lahey,
Economic Value of Homemakers 111
Louise Dulude,
Homemakers Pensions 117

Discussion with the Audience 124

Panel: **New Perspectives on Motherhood**
Jan Kinney, Disabled Mothers 135
Janine O'Leary Cobb, Older Mothers 137
Lucie Richardson, Military Mothers 145
Lorraine Stick, Native Perspectives 152

Discussion with the Audience 159

Closing Address
Introduction of Closing Speaker 165
Closing Speaker, Doris Anderson 166

Discussion with the Audience 176

OPENING REMARKS - JUNE 9, 1988

SANDRA KERR, Acting President

The Advisory Council on Women's Issues

Good evening, and welcome to **Motherhood in a Changing Society.** My name is Sandra Kerr and I am the Acting President of The Advisory Council on Women's Issues and Co-Chair of the Motherhood Conference Committee.

In 1973, following a Royal Commission on the Status of Women, the Ontario Cabinet created the Ontario Status of Women Council to advise the government on matters pertaining to women. Established at arms length, and as the only official advisory body on women's issues, Council is in a unique position to effectively challenge the government's directions and policies. To more aptly reflect a new role and mandate, the name was changed to the Ontario Advisory Council on Women's Issues in 1984.

Our mandate includes advising the government on matters regarding women; monitoring and assessing legislation, policies and programs for women; identifying specific areas for the government's attention and recommendation legislation and program changes. We do this in a variety of ways, including presenting research briefs, meeting with various women's groups throughout Ontario and holding public forums and consultations.

There are 15 members, including a President and a Vice-President, all of whom are appointed by Cabinet on a part-time basis for three years. Members come from all over Ontario and they reflect a wide range of opinions.

As many of you know we do not have a full Council and are awaiting news of the appointment of new members any time now. I would like you to meet the current members of The Advisory Council on Women's Issues who are here tonight. Susan McDonald from Arva is the Co-Chair of the Motherhood Conference Committee. Danielle Coulombe, from Hearst; Bernice Dubec, from Thunder Bay; Dianne Harkin, from Winchester; Sandra Manzig, from Windsor; Ceta Ramkhalawansingh, from Toronto; and Anne Rochon Ford, from Toronto.

We also have several staff that I would like to introduce to you in case you have any questions or queries. Bridget Vianna, our Executive Director; Lydia Oleksyn, Information Officer; and Elayne Ceifets, our Policy Advisor and our Conference Co-ordinator.

Over the last number of years Council has held numerous consultations in regions throughout Ontario and held major conferences in Toronto on sole support mothers, women and health, an equal society in the year 2000, pay equity and a youth forum. We have presented many briefs and papers and are currently looking at such diverse issues as new reproductive technologies and income tax structures.

Tonight we are hosting a debate on motherhood as a kick-off to examining motherhood in a changing society.

Now, why a debate? I know many of you might be expecting an evening of women bashing. I expect you will all be disappointed.

It seemed to us as we travelled and listened to women out beyond the boundaries of the large city centres, that women themselves were searching for some reasoned discussion. I am a mother of four children between the ages of 9 and 14. I am happily married to their father. I am also a woman. And I comfortably, unabashedly lay claim to being a feminist.

But more and more I have begun to hear statements that suggest feminists are against families, feminists do not speak for housewives, and feminists cannot be mothers.

Certainly the recent public seemingly-discordant reorganizations within two well-known women's organizations have given the public and women a feeling that as usual women just cannot get along. We are not here to hear the various groups' defenders. We are here as part of a focus on motherhood and how it is perceived in a changing society.

Society is changing at a rapid pace. The mere identification of an issue does not suggest easy, obvious answers. As we deal with new technologies, with social and economic issues and with ethical and legal questions that they pose, our image of what a mother is also changes and is being challenged.

The Council felt that it was time to get some of these points on the table. Motherhood may or may not be a part of your lifestyle as a woman, but as women, society's perception of you is coloured by its perception of motherhood. And the more some women fought to be equal in the work-place and in society, the more other women at home felt that their role as mothers was being undermined.

Tonight we wanted to take a look at this basic phenomenon. We have chosen as our debate the statement "Resolved: Families Benefit from Feminism."

We have selected the formal debate structure to discuss this. As such there will be no audience participation, but you are invited to discuss your ideas with any of our members in attendance and with the panelists afterwards.

I would now like to introduce the moderator for tonight's debate, Sarah Band. Sarah was a Council Member from 1984 to 1987. Her special interests while on Council were women in business and women in politics.

Her work at all levels of the political and voluntary sectors illustrates her dedication to community service. She has been involved with numerous organizations, including the Royal Ontario Museum, the Art Gallery of Ontario, raised funds for the Toronto Humane Society, the Canadian Centre of Films for Children, and participated as a Board Member of Young People's Theatre.

Her other appointments include Senior Vice-President of St. John Ambulance Ontario Council, Past President of the Progressive Conservative Business Association of Toronto, and Advisory Member of Young People's Theatre.

Sarah Band currently operates her own small business retailing exclusive Italian table and giftware here in Toronto under the name Sarahband.

Please welcome Sarah Band.

SARAH BAND

Retailer
Sarahband

Thank you very much, Sandra.

It is a pleasure to be back tonight with my colleagues and friends from The Ontario Advisory Council on Women's Issues. And welcome to the formal debate, **"Be it Resolved: Families Benefit From Feminism."**

Arguing for the resolution is Marjorie Cohen. Ms Cohen is an Economist and an Associate Professor at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. Besides contributing articles to many books and journals Ms Cohen has written a book on free trade which was published last year. She has also produced television programs for MTS and TV Ontario on a variety of subjects. Ms Cohen is the Vice-President of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women.

The other debater arguing for the resolution is Sheila Copps. Ms Copps has been the Hamilton East Member of Parliament since 1984. Previously she had been a member of the provincial Parliament in Ontario and a Journalist at the **Hamilton Spectator** and the **Ottawa Citizen**. In 1986 she wrote **Nobody's Baby**, a book chronicling her political career. As an active participant in the community Ms Copps has been the President of the Catholic Youth Organization and a Co-ordinating Committee Member of the National Year of the Disabled.

Arguing against the resolution, Gwen Landolt. Ms Landolt is a Lawyer and has been employed in the private practice as well as a Crown Prosecutor and with the federal government specializing in Immigration and Native Affairs. Ms Landolt was one of the founders in 1983 of R.E.A.L. Women and presenting is serving as Vice-President. She is a Member of the Board of Directors of Toronto Children's Aid and has been a volunteer consultant to several non-profit charitable organizations.

Also arguing against the resolution is Betty Steele. Ms Steele, author of **The Feminist Takeover, Patriarchy to Matriarchy in 2 Decades**, has recently returned from the United States where she has given lectures and interviews on public television and radio networks. Prior to her marriage and her career as a homemaker Ms Steele was a News Editor at **Marketing Magazine** and a freelance writer for radio, magazine and newspapers.

The debate, as you know, is split into two parts, the presentation and, of course, the rebuttal.
The presentation: Each debater has 10 minutes to present her arguments. The debate opens with the arguments for the resolution and is followed by arguments against the resolution. The first debater outlines her team's position and makes definite points in support of it.

The first debater arguing against the resolution follows the

same procedure and may also refute the argument made by the debater preceding her. Debaters alternate, arguing for and against the resolution.

Following the presentations there will be a 10 minute break, and then the teams will be back again and we will hear their rebuttal.

During the rebuttal each of the teams will speak for seven minutes, with the debater from the team arguing against the resolution going first. This portion of the debate allows each team to refute the statements made by the opposition during the presentation.

As the moderator I am allowed to ring the bell. At nine minutes I will tell them that they have one minute left and then they are cut off.

Speaking for the resolution first will be Marjorie Cohen.

MARJORIE COHEN
Economist
Associate Professor, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education

---

The position put forward by the opponents of the women's movement is that feminism has damaged the family. I will argue that the family, like all social institutions, has and will change over time and that the feminist movement contributes to this change in positive ways, particularly in providing new ways of looking at both women and the family.

Feminism has raised the issue of power and control over women. In its resurgence during the 1960s, feminists began by identifying the various ways in which women's freedom was denied. It was then that the family itself was identified in a different way. It was recognized that the family, rather than being a place of harmony, mutual support and a haven in a heartless world was often a place of oppression, both for women and children.

Initially correcting this was seen as the responsibility of individual women. We were urged to change our lives, to become more independent and, above all, to get a job.

Many women were offended by this approach and resented the implications that they personally were doing something very wrong. What was quickly recognized, fortunately, was that the problem was exceedingly complex and could not be solved simply by encouraging women to behave differently.

The family and what was happening to women in society was not something isolated from the rest of society. What occurs within the family, the way people behave, the roles assigned to its various members and indeed the very composition of the family itself is closely linked to what is happening in society at large. The world is changing and so too are the pressures on women and the family.

Feminists began by trying to sort out just what would enable women, not only to have choices about the way we live, but even more importantly to have a say in the way society itself works, to be a part of establishing the character of the world we live in, to shape the very nature of the choices available.

In doing this, feminists did not pose the issues as one in which women in the work-place would vie with women in the home for status or resources. This kind of formulation is seen as a false division which neglects the necessity of looking at the entire structure of society to understand women's oppression wherever women are placed.

And what follows. I want to look at some of the issue which have been central to feminist actions in Canada over the past 20 years and to explain why these actions have been crucial for women, for the family and for society at large.

One issue that has been extremely important has been the value placed on women's work in the family context. Women had not,

in the past, been seen as equal partners in a marriage and had not been given equal consideration for the value of their work under the law. Feminists pointed to the invisibility of women's labour in the home because of the general tendency to notice only paid work as real work.

Feminist academics examined the nature of this work and showed how crucial women's work in the home is to the functioning of our entire economy.

The legal disabilities women suffered from the undervaluing of their unpaid labour was very dramatic in a particular case. This was a case of an Alberta farm woman in the early 1970s who had contributed equally with her husband for 20 years in the running of the farm and yet was not granted anything when the marriage failed and her husband sold the farm.

Feminists across the country worked for years to change provincial property laws so that women would be recognized as equal partners in marriage under the law. And they were successful in doing this and it has been important for all women.

Yet, for the most part, women's work in the family is still unrecognized and uncompensated. One area that feminists have been particularly concerned about is the poverty of older women who have spent the major portion of their lives working for people in their households. Feminists have fought long and hard to ensure that these women are protected in some way through a pension system which would include them.

Another major area of concern for feminists has been the area of paid work. The very unequal treatment of women in the labour force has been a contributing factor to women's unequal treatment in society in general. It also contributes to very unequal power relationships within the family.

There was a time when women who had to work to support their families were made to feel that they were neglecting their children. Feminists have stressed that not all women are able to stay at home, but this does not mean that they are less than a mother because they have to work.

The vast majority of women who work for pay are responsible for the material wellbeing of their families. Their smaller earnings than men have grave consequences for their families. If women received equal pay this could in some ways help redress the balance of power in the home.

Many family decisions are predicated on who earns the most. For women in poor families low wages mean a life confined to poverty, both for them and for their children. Single women with children are particularly penalized because of the gross inequalities between male and female wages. These women and their children make up the bulk of the poor people in our society.

Feminists have been strong advocates of improving conditions for women in the labour force. We have fought for anti-discrimination legislation, for safer work places and, in

particular, we have drawn attention to the problem of reproductive hazards in the work-place, for equal pay legislation, for a higher minimum wage, for the end of sexual harassment in the work-place and for any kind of policies which will encourage women's organization in trade unions.

Feminists have also been advocates for a whole host of measures to ensure that our children have better lives. We have campaigned against the sex role stereotyping that we have all been subject to, both in schools and in home. We want better for our daughters and for our sons.

We recognize the need for better care for our children. Public support for all parents is minimal. Only a tiny proportion of the children of working parents are in adequate child care. This must be changed. It is feminists who have called attention to this problem and who are working for change. Families will be more secure when children are adequately cared for. Those against public daycare are using the same kinds of argument which were used a century ago against the public school system.

Related to this is the idea that all children should be wanted children. Feminists have been strong advocates of family planning and easy and equal access to abortion, should this be necessary. The stress of unwanted children for any woman must be avoided.

As a result of feminist action the issue of violence against women and children has become part of the public consciousness. This used to be something that was treated as an infrequent occurrence and something to be hushed up should it happen, but is now recognized as really endemic in our society.

Feminists have not only raised public consciousness, but have offered practical help through the provision of shelters for battered women and children. Thanks to feminists, women now have an alternative to staying in unbearable households. This has also been strengthened by improved divorce provisions and the enforcement of maintenance obligations on fathers.

Another action which has become important for healthier families and stronger children has been the invitation to men to become fully active in raising children. Feminists fight for public policies where the responsibility for parenting is shared. The most recent example of this has been the call for parental leave in the unemployment insurance system. We feel that an extended period beyond the maternity provisions, which could be taken by either parent, would enable more men to take responsibility for child care. Surely measures like this can only strengthen relations within families.

Feminists have called attention on the changing nature of the family. The family is not a homogeneous institution where the norm consists of a husband and a wife and biological children. The family can and does take a variety of forms. Our point is that this should be celebrated, not condemned and public policy needs to recognize and support these different types of families, whether they take the form of a parent living alone

with children or two people of the same sex living together or people living in communal situations.

Just as the family is not homogeneous neither are women. Feminists have stressed that we need to differentiate between the different experiences of women. Some women, such as women of colour and disabled women, face particularly gruesome obstacles in their lives, obstacles which are different from those all women face. These women and their families are victims of racism and prejudice, issues which have traumatic effect on their lives and on their children's lives.

Feminists have supported the demands of these women. We have worked for equal access to literacy programs, for recognition of different needs for refugee women, for affirmative action programs for women of colour, for better working conditions for domestic workers.

We have also been active in peace and environmental issues. Feminism is often accused of destroying the family because we do not like the way things are. It is true that we do not like the way things are, but what we want to destroy are oppressive features of the way people live together. In doing this we feel that women cannot be subsumed under the family. Individuals within the family have different experiences. What can be comfortable for a male patriarch can be intolerable for women and children.

Feminism has opened our eyes to new ways of seeing how people should be able to live together. When all people are equal within the family, when different ways people want to live together are tolerated and when public policies supports conditions so that these can occur then the family can be celebrated.

BETTY STEELE

Freelance Writer

I believe that our team speaks for the majority of Canadian women who are not feminists. Gwen Landolt speaks for 45,000 R.E.A.L. Women, with that membership growing, and I have had letters and phone calls from across the country since my book **The Feminist Takeover** came out, telling me that I speak for the silent majority. These are the women who have not been brainwashed into believing all the false assumptions in feminist ideology -- and we have heard quite a few of them just now -- that we see plainly as destroying families.

Just look at our divorce rate. Up to 50 per cent on the west coast, Rosemary Brown has just told us; 40 per cent right across the country; 50 per cent in Quebec; and look at the rates that we just saw this week; and by 1990 across the continent half of all our 18 year olds will have come from broken families.

If only this could have been a motherhood/fatherhood conference, because actually this conference shows exactly how feminism, rather than benefitting the family is destroying the family. With the alienation of the sexes, the generation of singles, the generation of spinsters, motherhood is alone in here.

Fatherhood belongs alone out there on the street. Fathers mourning their children. I know them. Their fatherhood has been taken away. Mothers have custody of their children in 92 per cent of all cases.

The children mourn too. We know now that more than 50 per cent of our children never recover fully from a family breakup. They are scarred psychologically for life.

Other fathers have become outcasts from the labour force as a result of feminism and families have certainly suffered. The feminist premise that all men are male chauvinist pigs who have been oppressing women and discriminating against them throughout the ages I have proven in my book is historically untrue. It is an absolute lie.

But men are being meted out the cruelest punishment in the most extreme, unjustified reverse discrimination for their forefathers sins. And this is enforced by our Charter of Rights, Section 15, engineered by our Ottawa feminists. Men are denied their rightful raises and advancement while affirmative action leapfrogging, bridging the one in five plan, and now pay equity legislates money and jobs to women.

Statistics Canada reports that women accounted for 94 per cent of the growth in the labour force between 1981 and 1986. Men are the unemployed and will be the unemployed and stripped of their traditional fatherhood role as the protector, supporter and destroying his role often has destroyed the family.

A Cabinet Minister in Sweden had a study done of 5,000

suffering Swedish men and what came back to her she said was a selective scream for help. And what she has decided is that we had better have schools and classes to teach men a new role.

Betty Friedan, who launched the Women's Liberation Movement in 1963 with her book, **The Feminist Mystique**, she was the pied piper who led that great middle class of women out of their homes, away from their families and often on to destruction, destruction being divorce.

I am not talking about the 15 to 20 per cent on the lower scale who always had to work and who we have to support in every possible way we can, or the women with exceptional skills, such as Sheila Copps, who could afford home substitutes and could always be in the upper echelons of government business and professions. My book proves this.

I am talking about all those women, many not wanting to leave their families, who are brainwashed into believing that they must fulfill themselves and that the only way to do this is by working. Her inability to see the role of the whole mother, the family manager as magnificent teamwork, more challenging, more difficult and far more rewarding than most one dimensional jobs out there in the work-place.

We have three perfect examples of that teamwork in the three wives of our federal leaders. Do you think that Mila or Geills or Lucille care one pin if they are not on the national news every night? They belong to a team, and I imagine they pray every night that their so-called team captain does not age 10 years for every one in that gruelling government work that most women do not want.

There was a conference in Ottawa about a month ago, a three party women's conference, and I have been told not one woman got up and said "I want to run in the next election."

And have you ever thought what is going to happen in a few generations, because we are not supposed to take our husband's name anymore. Some poor little kid in grade one is going to have to write "I am Johnny Smith-Jones-Clarks, da, da, da, da, da.

Families are teams. They are the Expos or the Blue Jays or the Gretzkys, and you cannot turn women into men and men into women with this idiotic feminist myth about equality.

I have been reading this incredible best seller called **Reinventing Women, God Didn't Do A Good Enough Job.** If men and women were equal all the olympic events would be sexless. It was Margaret Mead's simian theory that all differences were simply the result of cultural patterning. You gave little boys the trucks and you gave little girls the dolls, and that made all the difference. It was a theory disproven hundreds of times before Margaret Mead died, but still feminism presses on towards absolute androgyny. You must be the fire fighter, the policewoman, the railway worker and drive the tanks into the front lines of battle, but you will not have any time to nurse your baby.

You cannot ignore biology and all the psychological differences between men and women. And please listen here, these have justified differences in wage scales and occupations in the past, and the U.S. Department of Labour now has figures that prove that women work 30 per cent fewer hours than men and 77 to 100 fewer years than men.

And let me tell you that not many families can survive androgyny. It is another terminal illness and death is divorce.

And what about those babies? Well, feminism would just throw them away. Our precious children are known as the throw aways in our society, in a feminist society, thrown into inadequate daycare. Every newspaper, everyday tells you it is inadequate daycare. But that is where our children are, where even in the best of conditions a child is twelve times more likely to incur infection than in the home, the American Pediatric Association claims. While babies in day time orphanages, Dr. Elliott Barker says, will never learn bonding or empathy with all those care givers and may become psychopaths, unable to relate to others.

Our teenagers go home to empty feminist homes. They get their breakfasts often, their lunches and their dinners, except in Cambridge, Ontario, which is known as an affluent society, and they found out they were not getting very good breakfasts so now they have breakfast clubs for them.

And we do not even want children anymore. We have the second fastest falling birthrate in the world, with Quebec in crisis. With its 50 per cent divorce rate, dwindling marriages and the French language at stake. And all our population experts say that by the year 2050 our population will drop from 25 million to 15 million and then we are going to have to hurry up and invite all the refugees and all the immigrants into Canada.

Feminism in our view is harming families, is destroying families and it is time we turned our back on feminists.

SHEILA COPPS

Member of Parliament
Hamilton East

Well, thank you very much.

When I first received the invitation to come I was almost tempted to say no. And the reason I wanted to say no was because I thought that as a country and as a community we had gone beyond the debate about whether or not feminism is good for the family. I can see, however, by some of the reaction here tonight and by a telex that I want to read to you that indeed we have not come a long way, baby, and we still have a very long way to go.

I got a telex this afternoon on my way out from a gentleman who shall remain unnamed.

> "As a Member of Parliament, Sheila is paid to represent all the people in her constituency, half of whom are men, and to work to unify people and resolve differences..."

et cetera, et cetera.

> "The feminist philosophy has no place for men in the feminist world. If Sheila argues in favour of feminism then she is telling half her constituents they are redundant. This is worse than telling Hamilton the steel industry is unimportant."

And anyway, he goes on and on.

I am glad that there are so many men here tonight. And the reason I am glad is because I think that you really misunderstand first of all the premise of what is feminism. And in order to intelligently argue this debate I think we have got to address the question "What is a feminist." We can go back to the '60s and look to the bra burning and the so-called radical element, but if you look at what is feminist, the word itself, it comes from Latin. It means "woman". And in my book feminism means equality of the sexes. It is not something to hate men, it is not something to denigrate men, it is not something to somehow be superior to men or have force over men, it is the chance for women to have an opportunity to be equal partners in a family, equal partners in a relationship and equal partners in society.

I have a daughter who is here. I hope she does not grow up to be a psychopath, because I would like my daughter to have -- and I think Betty mentioned the fact that my mother's generation -- I think this really touched me -- and Marjorie talked a lot on the statistical advancements of women as a result of feminism, including things like the Family Law Reform Act, including an opportunity.

But I will tell you a little anecdote from my own family. My mother is 63 years old. She was the wife of a politician, she

raised four children. She was the secretary and, by the way, my family background, my mother was one of seven children who lived in a two room house in the east end of Hamilton, she got a job working as a secretary at the steel company and as soon as she got married she quit. That was expected. She raised her four children and she, in the '60s, was probably among those women who were concerned and not quite sure what the feminist movement meant because somehow she saw it as maybe infringing on her right as a wife and mother.

Once her children grew up she then began to look what life had in store for her. Three years ago she ran for public office. She was elected Alderman in Ward 4 in the City of Hamilton and she said that, and I will never forget her words because it made me so proud, you know, she said "For the first time in my life I have done something for myself. I have supported my husband. I have supported my children and now I have done something for myself." And I see feminism as giving my daughter a chance to experience, at age 20, 30 and 40, what my mother had to wait to 61 years of age to experience.

I do not see it as a threat. I do not see the idea of bringing equality into a relationship as in any way denigrating or down playing or destroying the role of men. If anything, it gives men a chance to love, it gives men a chance to share and to cry and to come together in a relationship in a way that 20 years ago you did not see a man who would take time off work to nurture and father and be with his children, because that was not manly. And you did not see a woman going off to work because that was considered not to be a feminine trait. Equality in feminism permits all of the choices to be available.

And even now we have much of a struggle, certainly with the pay situation for women with the child care situation which is not terrific. There is a lot of work to be done. But even in the short time since women have been declared persons there are people sitting in this room who were voting age in this country and could not vote simply because they were women. And feminism said that that was wrong and they should have a chance to be equal. And I see a lady shaking her head and she remembers. It took a judgment of the court to determine that women were persons because they were children in the eyes of the law in the living age of this country. And for that I am glad that we have Section 15 of the Charter and I am glad that as a society we recognized that we should move together in equality.

But in relation to the issues that women have raised as feminists, the issue of family violence. It was a closet issue 20 years ago. It happened. I am sure every person in this room can probably give situations in their own family or close friends where alcoholism and wife beating/spouse beating was carried on on a regular basis and nothing was said. The feminist movement has brought that issue out into the open.

Child abuse was not discovered in 1988, child abuse has been going on for many, many years. But finally, because women have come forward and said "We have got to open these questions up" it is being debated in a full and open way.

I cannot for the life if me understand why you men feel threatened because you want to be in a relationship. Why you men -- and now I can see it, because I saw one of the gentlemen over here specifically pointing a finger like a toy gun at Marjorie Cohen when she was speaking and it was a motion of, you know, let us get her off the stage.

Obviously some of you feel threatened. I do not know why. I have a very loving husband. I am in a loving relationship. I do not think that the fact that I am a feminist makes me any less of a family person, any less devoted to my family. In fact, one of the things that drives me, even more strongly now, is having a daughter and wanting my daughter to have the same opportunity as my son. I do not see that as competition. We do not want to be treated specially. We do not want special treatment. All we want is the opportunity to make the same kinds of choices that have been available to men for generation upon generation.

And if you take a look at the simple piece of legislation in the Province of Ontario, which may cite some reaction, called the Family Law Reform Act. That was a piece of legislation brought in as a result of agitation by women which said that when you are in a marital relationship for 10, 15, 20 or 30 years, if there is a breakup of that relationship surely you should have an equal division of the assets of that family. And that was a notion that was unheard of in my mother's time.

Ironically, the case that Marjorie made mention of, that woman, the farmer who went all the way to the Supreme Court to fight for her rights. She ended up dying penniless because, even though the Supreme Court ultimately gave her her judgment, I believe the money went off in lawyer's fees and she never actually saw the sum total of dozens of years of work that she had put in on the family farm.

So I do not see that feminism should be seen as a threat. I do not see that because in a Parliamentary way I stand up and fight for women I am in any way denigrating my responsibility to all my constituency. I see it as a liberating phenomenon for men and for women.

Today in the House of Commons I asked a question about the Federal Court of Canada judgment that came out yesterday which said that parental leave should be granted in en surplus, pas pour remplacer les benefices de la femme, mais en plus et tu va avoir les droit des pères les congés parenteaux.

I raised that issue in the House because I see that as a liberating thing. If we can have parental leave, not to replace pregnancy leave, but to supplement pregnancy leave, then as a society we are finally saying that men and women have the opportunity to be involved equally in the raising of their children.

And the Federal Court of Canada judgment was very clear. It said that the current provisions, which denied that leave to a natural fathers, the same leave that was given to adoptive fathers, was in fact anti-Constitutional. It was that same equality rights amendment which is being denigrated by those

who are against the feminist movement that permitted that judgment to come from the Court today. And that is a judgment which hopefully will encourage fathers to be more involved. I do not see that as being a punishment or a carrying back...

And, Betty, I -- you know, many, many people might like to say that things should go back to the way it was in **Father Knows Best**. The reality -- I do not know how things were in your family, but if I talked to my grandmother, who has been dead a good many years now, things were not always that rosy in lots of families. People stayed together, lived in abusive situations, lived in extremely bad situations because there was a very strong social pressure to remain together.

But that social pressure did not take into account the individuals, both husband and wife right to live in a decent family and the kind of effect that that would have on the children.

I say that what we have today is a more liberated society. Yes, we do have more family breakdown and we should work to discourage that. But we also have more people who are in a situation to live their lives to the fullest, men and women, and we do not have a situation where now, just because when you come out of your mother's womb you are born a woman, you are not given the same opportunity. That is what I think feminism is. It is equality and it should be respected.

GWEN LANDOLT

Lawyer
Vice-President
R.E.A.L. Women

I am very glad that I can be here, perhaps, to express to you the views of a woman, perhaps, who is what you might call a transitional women. I went to law school long before it was socially accepted. There were four women and 110 men in my class. And I am not the feminist in the Margaret Cohen's point of view.

Feminism can be attributed in many ways. If you mean equality and equal respect for men and women then I am a feminist. But if you mean giving advantages to others, to women over that of men then I do not agree with it.

Now, one of the main problems why I, as a woman, have not chosen to become a feminist, a radical feminist in the common term as we use as a way of distinguishing, is because it is based on a flawed analysis. As you know, it was started and begun by Betty Friedan in 1963 in her book **The Feminine Mystique.** And she blamed the problems in society around the family, allegedly on the grounds that women were oppressed and that women's -- and our femininity was our problem.

In fact, in her book -- this is a direct quote of what she said. She said that:

> "Women have no real choices."

She said:

> "We are quite simply committing genocide, starting with the mass burial of American women and ending with the progressive dehumanization of their sons and daughters."
>
> "The home..."

said Ms Friedan,

> "...was a comfortable concentration camp whose prisoners, housewives, had been brainwashed by femininity. Such women were not fully human."

Now, why did she find that being feminine was not to be human?

She found the characteristics that made a woman human was that to acquire that of the male, assertiveness, aggressiveness, power, to command and not to be in the home. She looked upon those women who made a choice to be at home as less than human, to be dehumanized and that they are controlled by their biology.

But what is wrong with being a woman? We are women. We do get pregnant, we do have babies and we do like to nurture and mother, many of us. Now, some women say no, some deny it, but the vast majority of us do, and there is a need within us.

But we are finding all the feminists, we have Friedan, Greer, Milay, Kate Millet, are all saying the same thing, and they are saying that motherhood should be disparaged and is merely biological. And she has professional careers they have glamorized to an extent fully as extreme in the '50s as being a homemaker was glamorized. And what has happened with feminism is that they have again made the same mistake of the '50s, that they have put women into another straightjacket, that we have no value, we do not matter, we have no recognition unless we acquire male characteristics.

And lest you think that those days of early feminism are gone, let me read to you a paper which was put out by the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women, which, I might add, receives over $200,000 of your tax payers money a year from the Women's Program, Secretary of State. This was written in 1985. And what do they say there?

> "Taking care of a young child is slaves work."

She says that:

> "We must develop methods to liberate mothers."

And then she goes on to say:

> "The only ones to care for children, and in fact the only ones to care about them are women, who are prisoners of this job."

What a way to look upon those women who choose to be a homemaker. This is not to say that all women should be in the home working full time, but it should be that women should be given the options. They should not be denigrated. And those women who make the decision, and a magnificent decision, to forego their careers and a paycheque to look after their children are extraordinarily courageous women in the 1980s, because those women are saying "I am making up my own mind. I am not going to be dictated to and put into the straightjacket of Canadian feminism which is based on a flawed analysis. And there are millions of Canadian women who have made that decision. And women to it with their minds wide open.

The Kate Millet's and the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, they look upon women who choose to remain at home as less than human, but they also regard the act of mothering, which many women choose and is an integral part of their nature, they regard it as soulless and degrading, according to Friedan. Tasks at home and child care are to be relegated and to be ignored. And instead of that what do they want us to do? They want us to hire other women to look after our children. They want other women to be paid less.

Motherhood to them has become a nuisance from which society must relieve women and we must pay women, "lower class women" or women at the lower end of the economic stick to look after our children because they have chosen the better way.

But this is the 1980s. The 1980s is the time for us to reconsider and reflect where society is going. Right now society gives us women three choices. One choice is the professional career. The second choice is, alas, those women who choose to be at home and be less than human, according to feminists. The third choice they have alloted us is to be called "The Super Women" wishes to do both.

Now, not many of us are super women. I am the first one in the world to drop out of the super women category. I cannot do it and not many of us can. It is extraordinarily difficult.

And so the time has come to blur those lines. The time has come to build a new society for women, women where they will have the choices and will not be denigrated and put down by the feminists who find a better way. Because the point is the family is a basic unit of society. Throughout history we have tried to find a better way than the family unit.

Now, you have heard Ms Cohen say it is a case of oppression. Friedan, they are all saying it is a terrible place. And sometimes it can be. But the vast majority of cases, the children grow and flourish with a mother and a father, hopefully living together.

The point is too that we have tried everything else. We have tried the kibbutz. That did not work. We have tried communal living. It did not work. And here we are in the 1980s. Let us take a hard look, how do we allow women to have our families, to be mothers, without being put into those three hard choices.

Now, I agree, live is many choices. But many of use do want a family. We do want children and we do want that experience of nurturing. Now, men can nurture, and they do a good job, but they do it differently, and that is a fatal flaw of feminism. They say men and women are equal and the same, but men and women are equal but different. And the big difference is that 90 per cent of us women either have children or want them and want to have the experience of nurturing our children.

So let us get together and build a better society. The better society allows us to have it all, but maybe in stages. To be at home with our children during those early, important nurturing years; to be working part time if we want, or full time; it gives longer maternity leave. Germany, France and in Great Britain some businesses are allowing five years maternity leave. Why not? The business world was built by men for men. Now it is time to adjust it to fit women and our needs and our femininity, which is part of being a woman.

Part time work with benefits; extended maternity leave, as in some of the European countries. We would like to see, the most important of all, is job sharing, that I can work for two

days, but I can be with my children for the other three and someone can take my job.

We have a job ahead of us, it is not to hate men, it is to look upon men as friends and our companion; it is to look upon marriage as a joy, which it can be; it is to look upon families as the best way to raise our children, to care for the handicapped and to look after the aged; it is to have men and women joining together to look after our families.

Thank you.

Sarah Band: Thank you, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you, debaters.

Now for the rebuttal. Both debaters from the teams will take part. I will ask that Betty Steele and Gwen Landolt make their comments speaking against the resolution.

BETTY STEELE: Do you realize that the main theme of many feminists now deals with wife abuse. They refer to the hundreds of surveys that the women's council present, paid for by our tax money, surveys that are rarely authenticated. The reports always being "It is estimated," that is not good enough for a report, and list verbal and psychological abuse, so that every domestic argument then could be abuse. Yet our government plans to hand out $40 million in reply to such reports.

We must have reports that separate physical and psychological and verbal. Why do we not demand this. Now then, also we should have demand money that also be available, then, for the husband abuse, which the In Search of Justice organization is documenting.

Gwen Landolt and I now could spend from now until tomorrow morning going over our research that proves how feminism is destroying our families, but then again you can read my book. It records hundreds of authenticated surveys in rebuttal of the whole feminist movement.

So I simply want to deliver another message here tonight and that is in the form of a challenge to all our federal politicians in Ottawa, and that includes you, Sheila. Please consider sending this to Ottawa.

In the United States the month that Ronald Reagan took office, in his first term he appointed a very great man, a Gary Bower, to go right across the United States assessing the condition, the problems in the American family that have become gigantic in the 20 years of the feminist revolution, even threatening the families disappearance, in a 50 per cent divorce rate, the rise of homosexuality, the eruption of all moral values. You will remember that it was the Women's Liberation Movement, liberation from all sexual restraints.

When Gary Bower returned to Washington there was money and services available for families all over the country. They were helping to save families. Surely our government cares as much about our families, not just about this one area, wife abuse, that is all really feminists talk about.

So I am challenging our federal government to appoint a Gary Bower in Canada to study the problems of the Canadian Family, and I am nominating Gwen Landolt, who has been fighting for the Canadian family for five years, or Ross Virgin, who is a non-stop fighter in search of justice, just basic justice. And I plead with our federal government to stop being intimidated by radical feminists and legislate every women's council in Canada into a family council with men and women with equal representation of men and women. That would be equality. We would be putting men and women back together again into the mainstream where they belong and then they could handle all our problems together.

But I would like also to ask that this motherhood conference consider endorsing this challenge, that we then have family councils rather than women's councils. And then fatherhood, out there in the street could come inside out of the cold.

GWEN LANDOLT: What I want to say tonight is as I said, men and women are equal and different. And I want to say that every woman is also difference, and no one organization can possibly speak for all the women of Canada, and that what we have right now with N.A.C. and many of the organizations is what would be a socialist feminist agenda.

All of us want equality, but we do not necessarily want the socialist agenda of equal pay for work of equal value, which is nothing more than redistribution of the income by the state. We do not necessarily want extremist positions of decriminalized prostitution, abortion on demand. We do not want all those socialists.

There are different approaches to equality. And as every woman has a different idea, a different vision of tomorrow, and every family is unique, we must try to blend our different views so that we can restore the family and have women doing what they want to do, what is best for themselves as individuals and best for their families. But we do not want one single definition of equality, because all of us have different approaches.

R.E.A.L. Women has a very different approach to equality than that of the feminists, but it does not mean that either of us are right and one is wrong, it means that they are different. And what we want to do is to make a better world together, a better world for men, for women and children.

The feminist position of universal 24-hour daycare, which is going to cost us $11.5 billion annually, is not the choice of all. It was restriction in a straightjacket again. Let us have other options. Other options, for example, as giving the money to the family and let the family decide what care they want for their children according to the families needs and to the families values. Let the family make the decisions as to how they want to live and what is best for them, because we do know that the family is the best possible unit we have. Even the leading feminist, Michelle Landsberg, has had to acknowledge that we have never improved on the family unit.

But let us not look on one straightjacket of what the feminists want, let us blend our views and make a better world for all of us according to meeting our individual needs and our own family values. We do not all share the same values, but please, I do want to see that we do have family values, regardless of what kind of family the people may have in mind.

But we do know that the family is the best way to go and we would like to see individuals, and we would like to see a blending of women to do what they want with their lives and not be told, as they were in the '50s, to do something or in the '70s by the feminists.

Thank you.

Sarah Band: Now, speaking for the resolution, Marjorie Cohen and Sheila Copps.

MARJORIE COHEN: It is difficult tonight to sort out what was most offensive about what I heard from my opponents, but I think that what really was most difficult was the good mother/bad mother routine, and it is essentially that homemakers are non-feminist and are good mothers and women who work are feminists and are bad mothers.

Essentially what we see is that there is an incredible intolerance for choices and for the way women have to live their lives. 71 per cent of the families in this Canada depend upon two incomes. That is not a minor statistical blurb, it is a big thing that is going on in this country. And it is not because feminists have pushed women into the labour force that it is happening. Our society is changing and the way we live is changing because of this.

What I heard tonight is that essentially the women can work if they have exceptional skills, like Sheila, or if they are of the lower scale, then they are allowed to work and it is okay, but everybody else needs to stay at home with their children.

I really cannot believe that here in 1988 we are arguing about whether or not women should be working. I mean, frankly, we need to work. We have to live, we have to exist and this is not something that should be debateable now.

The other issue which was raised by the first speaker is that women had been brainwashed by feminism, by feminist ideology, and the second speaker referred to N.A.C. as a version of socialism and any kind of feminist action which calls for equal pay and for abortion, or for rights for prostitutes, is somehow seen as subversive to our entire society.

People have worked for a long time to protect certain kinds of people in this society, particularly those who are minority groups and who are oppressed by others in this society. And this is what feminism is all about. Equal pay is a really old idea. A part of it came from John Stewart Mill who was certainly not a socialist, and it is an old notion that when things are unfair you need to redress and you do it by equal pay.

I actually was amazed by the tone of the debate tonight. This is the kind of thing people were arguing in the '50s. I am amazed it is still going on.

SHEILA COPPS: Well, I think we could sort of maybe take issue with certain individual statements, but I would like to go back to refer specifically to what Gwen said at the end of her talk. What she said was that we do not want everybody to follow a singular path, and I think this is something that hopefully the feminist movement has been able to achieve. I think it is quite true.

And one of the things that I would like to address is the notion that somehow women who support equality in the family denigrate or in some way down play or do not respect the job that is done by other women who are home raising their children. I think this is a fallacy. I believe it is a fallacy and I think that maybe if you look to the history of

the feminist movement, and I have not done a great study of what Betty Fredan said -- Betty Fredan had a second book, and I think that there has been an evolution in the feminist movement.

We started off, yes, with people taking extreme positions and saying that this is the way things have to be, just as we have on the other side. Meanwhile, over the last 20 years, there has been a rapprochement, a recognition.

You know, it was the National Action Committee on the Status of Women that in 1976 proposed that there be a homemakers' pension introduced into the Federal House of Commons. It was not some group that was against feminists.

Those are the kinds of issues that women have been working for all these years, and that is why when Gwen Landolt says that she would like women to have choices I could not agree more, and I would like to see a time when we do not have this kind of a debate which, frankly, I see as divisive for women, it has women pitted against each other fighting on the issues of our children and our families, and instead where we are coalescing and coming together on the major issues.

And just to stress that point, there is also a notion that somehow if you are a woman -- if you are a feminist you want to deny your womanhood, you want to make yourself like a man. I think in fact one of the qualities of being able to get out there into the paid labour force is that maybe you will bring a bit of your womanhood into the working world in a way that will benefit.

If you look at the peace movement it is no accident that two-thirds of the people involved in the peace movement are women, because they view the world in a different way. We are equal. We are different. We embrace those differences. I do not want to be a man. I am very happy to be a woman. I am happy that I had an opportunity to give birth and have a wonderful daughter.

But I also think that if we come together as women, we are going to do a lot more in the long run and I hope that in 1988 we have reached beyond the point of having these kinds of public arguments, which in my mind simply reinforce the notion held by an unfortunate majority that when women get together they just love to fight.

I think it is a really negative stereotype and that hopefully if we do share some goals, and we may not all be on the same wave-length on every single issue, but we want to work together is to say that if you have the choice of remaining in the home then you should be able to have that choice without feeling shame or without being denigrated. And if you have been denigrated by women friends then I think we should be bringing those women into the 21st Century and saying, "Yes, let us have that opportunity to choose."

But I do not think that simply turning your back on feminism is going to solve the problems of bringing equality into the family relationships.

SARAH BAND: Well, now that you have heard the debaters you obviously feel some passion, either side, because we have had a fairly heated argument.

I have been delighted to be their moderator. I think both sides have shown the force for all of us and I thank them very much.

I would now like to call upon Sandra Kerr, your Acting President to give the closing remarks.

SANDRA KERR: On behalf of the Ontario Advisory Council on Women's Issues I would, first of all, thank Sarah Band for moderating this panel and our panelists for agreeing to take part in admittedly perhaps a debate that should have occurred in the '50s, that might have occurred in the '50s and that perhaps had undercurrents in terms of the '60s and '70s and obviously we are standing here in the '80s looking at these points.

But I wanted to remind you that the reason we brought them together was hopefully that we could talk as a group and that we could take a look at where there may be differences but where there may indeed be similarities. And we invite you to discuss those possibilities amongst yourselves and, certainly, if you would like to take a moment to talk to the panelists I am sure any of them would be happy to do that.

The next two days on our Motherhood conference are taking a look at some of the issues that we think address motherhood and some of the changing occurrences around societies view of motherhood. And we invite you to come back tomorrow and Saturday.

We are opening tomorrow with a keynote speaker, Bernice Martin, who is a well-known Sociologist from London who will, in fact, talk about the value of the role of the mother as a homemaker in the household.

And we will have two sessions, one on societies view of motherhood, looking at it from the perspective of both education, work-place and the media, and a number of other areas. As well we hope to address, on our second half of the day, questions around new reproductive technology.

On Saturday we are looking at the economic value of homemakers and housework and on the new perspectives on motherhood, where we take a look at some of the issues surrounding motherhood in a changing society. And our closing address will be delivered by Doris Anderson.

We invite you to take part. I do hope that you will be able to join us.

I thank you very much for being an excellent audience in terms of listening to the debate and I would like to thank, on behalf of you, all of the participants in the debate.

OPENING REMARKS - JUNE 10, 1988

SUSAN McDONALD
Council Member

Good morning and welcome to **Motherhood in a Changing Society**. My name is Susan McDonald and I am a member of The Advisory Council on Women's Issues and Co-Chair of the Motherhood Conference Committee. I am also happily married and a mother of two teenage daughters of whom I am inordinantly proud.

Before I go any further I would like you to meet the other members of our Council and staff. Sandra Kerr, our Acting President and Co-Chair of the Motherhood Conference; Danielle Coulombe, from Hearst; Bernice Dubec, from Thunder Bay; Sandra Manzig, from Windsor; Dianne Harkin, from Winchester; Ceta Ramkhalawansingh, from Toronto; and Anne Ford, from Toronto.

On our staff, without whom nothing would be accomplished, Bridget Vianna, Executive Officer; Lydia Oleksyn, Information Officer; Elayne Ceifets, without whom this conference would not have been organized.

For those of you who were not here last night may I give you a little background on the Advisory Council. Following a Royal Commission on the Status of Women the Ontario Cabinet in 1973 created the Ontario Status of Women Council to advise the government on matters pertaining to women. Established at arms length and as the only official advisory body on women's issues Council is in a unique position to effectively challenge the government's direction and policies.

To more aptly reflect the new role and mandate the name was changed to The Ontario Advisory Council on Women's Issues in 1984. Our mandate includes advising the Ontario government on matters regarding women through consultation with the Minister Responsible for Women's Issues; monitoring and assessing of legislation, policies and programs for women; identifying specific areas for the government's attention and recommending legislation and program changes. We also meet with women's groups throughout Ontario and hold public forums.

There are 15 members, including a President and Vice-President, all of whom are appointed by Cabinet on a part time basis for three year terms.

As you heard, members come from all over Ontario and we hope to reflect a wide range of opinions.

Over the last number of years Council has held numerous consultations in regions throughout Ontario and we have held major conferences in Toronto on sole support mothers, women and health, youths, an equal society and pay equity.

Last evening we were treated to a very thought provoking debate on whether or not families benefit from feminism. As I thought about and mulled over the arguments before going to sleep it occurred to me that really most of us are all saying the same thing only perhaps from different points of view. We

the same thing only perhaps from different points of view. We all want to see strong cohesive families of all types. We all agree that the family is the most important unit in society. Feminists want equal partnership in the family without power struggles, without fear of violence, without fear of starvation. Families where every member has dignity and a sense of self-worth. The right to choose how the family unit will operate is one of the blessings of our democratic way of life and any improvements we can make to encourage love and sharing and self-fulfillment are what we hope we are here today to discuss.

How are mothers portrayed on television? Is Canada's multiculturalism reflected in the way other institutions address and present motherhood? What are artificial insemination, test tube babies and frozen embryo transplants and what do they have to do with being a mother? How does society value the work that homemakers do? What does it mean to be a mother if you are disabled or living on a military base?

All these questions and many more, we hope, will be addressed over the next two days.

There are so many aspects of motherhood that it is impossible to cover them, but we are counting on you to comment on the areas of motherhood not presented formally by the panelists and there will be an hour following each panel presentation for comments and questions and we really do encourage you to use that time.

It is now my very great pleasure to introduce you to the Minister Responsible for Women's Issues, the Honourable Gregory Sorbara.

Mr. Sorbara was appointed Minister of Labour and Minister Responsible for Women's Issues on September 29th, 1987.

Elu pour la première fois a la législature de l'Ontario en mai 1985, M. Sorbara avait précedemment été nommé ministre des collèges et universités et ministre de la formation professionnelle.

Prior to his career in politics, Mr. Sorbara spent nine years in British Columbia, and in the company of young Canadians, I understand, before returning to Ontario to study Canadian history and political science at York University.

He later attended Osgoode Hall Law School, graduating in 1981. Called to the Bar in 1983 he went on to practice corporate and commercial law. Mr. Sorbara lives on a farm in Maple with his wife and six children.

Please join me in welcoming the Honourable Gregory Sorbara.

THE HONOURABLE GREGORY SORBARA

Minister Responsible for Women's Issues and Minister of Labour

---

Ladies and gentlemen, I want to begin by simply pointing out that I think this is a very important conference, a very important issue. It is interesting that the expression "Motherhood" has a variety of meanings, but we have, all of us, heard the hackneyed phrase "Oh well, that is a motherhood issue." as if everyone agreed on it and it is not very important and it is not the subject for a great deal of debate.

I think that the fact that this conference is taking place speaks to how fundamentally we are re-examining issues particularly relating to women and women's participation in our society. We are looking at very, very fundamental questions.

So I want to congratulate The Ontario Advisory Council on Women's Issues for organizing this conference. I am sure that it is going to inspire a great deal of discussion and positive examination of the changing roles of both men and women in our society.

I understand the debate last night was a very vibrant one. There were not so much opposing camps but opposing points of view and I congratulate the Council for beginning this conference with that sort of debate.

It is interesting as I stand in this building and hear the trains going by underneath and feel the shaking of the building that if more women and particularly more mothers had been involved in designing this building and putting the subway in underneath they would say "No, that is a no go. A train like that will wake up the baby all night long. You cannot do it." Would that we would have had more of that in designing the rumble underneath us.

I want to thank Sandra Kerr, who, as you know, is the Acting President of the Council, and her staff for organizing this event. I know how hard Sandra and all the people involved, how much work they have put into it, and they are to be commended. This conference, as I think some of you will know, is just one example of the work done by the Advisory Council. Part of the Advisory Council's continuing role is bringing women together to talk about issues that affect all of us.

The Ontario Cabinet has recently reaffirmed the necessity of this role and I am pleased to announce that after the statutory requirement for a sunset review, and notwithstanding a period of restraint in government, government has decided that the role of the Council is too crucial to the ongoing development of public policy and has renewed the mandate of the Council and we will shortly be renumbering its ranks to a full complement and reconfirming its mandate and its responsibilities to help government to shape and articulate public policy in the province.

Our government, of course, will continue to work with the Advisory Council as we work towards securing economic, social and legal equality for Ontario women.
In all of its efforts the Advisory Council has explored the changing role of women in our society, and that is exactly what we are here to talk about today, the changing role of women in our society.

The impact of the women's movement is one of the most dramatic social changes witnessed in this century. The women's movement has caused us to re-examine the roles of each of us, both men and women, the roles that we play in our society, which brings me specifically to the theme of this conference, motherhood in a changing society, a phrase, I think, which bears close examination. It is not a simple task, given what appears to be vast societal change.

People look to political solutions for private problems when they realize that their personal difficulties are shared by similar people. There is a perceived shift from a sense of personal struggle to a concept of responsibility within the larger community. Suddenly it is a political question rather than a personal struggle. It is no accident therefore that the myriad of issues that surround child care and parental roles has become a political question.

As Minister Responsible for Women's Issues and Minister of Labour I am obviously involved on a daily basis in the issues related to the role of government in the balance that is struck between working life and family life, a balance that will ultimately affect the quality of life that all of us enjoy in this province.

But first let us look briefly at some of the changes in classic family patterns that have so altered our view of ourselves and our families. Specifically the movement of women into the paid work force which started more than a century ago. Its origins really go back at least two centuries.

The industrial revolution not only resulted in displacing work that could be done within the context of the home and family, but increased labour productivity, an increased productivity that raised the wages that employers were willing to pay workers of both sexes. Though lower than men's wages, women's wages gradually became high enough to make their monetary contribution to the economic support of many families and even more frequent necessity.

In Canada today only 16 per cent of all the workers now come from the traditional family constellation of the male bread winner as sole support of his work-in-the-home wife and their children. Only 16 per cent.
Nearly 55 per cent of all Canadian women now work outside the home, compared to the 38 per cent in 1960. During that period the number of both two parent, two paycheque families and one parent, one paycheque families has increased dramatically. And let us not forget that the single largest group entering the work force is women with children under three years of age.

Well, in addition to the social and employment trends that I have just cited advances in technology have begun to turn our understanding of what constitutes a mother and a father inside out.

As one Toronto journalist recently observed in a series of articles examining new reproductive technologies:

> "A child born of these technologies can have as many as five different parents, the sperm donor, the egg donor, the gestation mother and the parents who raise the child."

Less sensational, but more profound, has been the effect of medical advances in reproductive control. Such developments have given women both new freedom and new responsibilities.

What do all of these changes mean to our concept of motherhood and how should we and our institutions respond? I think those are some of the questions that you may be exploring over the next two days.

Clearly western society has been rethinking the role of women as full time caretaker of children for some time. For the most part in purely economic terms. Admittedly for many this is a shocking notion. After all, how does one put a price on women's contribution to society as she devotes her energies to our most fundamental and important unit, the family? This is a large part of the problem.

In the past, though motherhood was idealized and often romanticized it often tended to isolate and marginalize women. Their exclusive devotion to the role rendered them more dependant upon the benevolence of their families and their societies.

I recall, just to tell you of a little personal experience, as Susan noted, there was a time in my life when my wife and I and our children, or the first few of our children, lived in a very rural, rather romantic community in the mountains of British Columbia, a society very different from the nature of life in Toronto and the nature of work within the Government of Toronto. And after we moved here and I began to study and then practice law and later get involved in the politics of this province, I remember my wife saying to me on occasion after occasion, about her sense of isolation as a mother of six children working in the home, part of that 16 per cent.

And I think we, as a society, have to be very concerned about that sense of isolation and sense of marginalization as we re-examine how we support the family unit and re-examine motherhood in a changing society.

If we go back to our historic overview we see that the cherished ideal of the family, that is the stay at home wife and mother, coupled with the bread winner husband, the scenario typical of the 1950s and 1960s will probably prove to be a short chapter in the saga of the western family. In truth the idealized life of the wife and mother has not been the experience of all women. Many women have been forced to

deal with life's hardships from an economically and socially disadvantaged position.

It is not surprising that decade after decade women in all technologically advanced countries have responded by entering the paid work force in ever increasing numbers.

Reproductive technology is another significant factor in women's labour force participation. In North America women are bearing about half as many babies as in 1900 and about one-quarter as many as in 1800. It is hard to say, however, if women are having fewer children because of work force participation or are working outside the home because they are having fewer children. In truth birth rates and economic factors are interdependent and are in constant interplay.

It should probably not be surprising to hear me say that against this background of change government has and will continue to have a major role to play in providing policies that address the needs of all families. This will mean, amongst other things that government will continue to have a profound impact on policies that affect what are now considered to be motherhood issues. These policies will affect a full range of human experience, not only the quality of work and family life, but new reproductive technologies as well.

The Government in Ontario is committed to women's equal participation in society and to supplying the supports necessary so that each and every woman in the province can participate to whatever degree she chooses in all aspects of society. Fully consistent with this we recognize the motherhood and child care roles as central and crucial to the functioning of our society rather than ones that do marginalize women.

How we are to go about assuring the value of motherhood and child care and those central roles in our society is not universally agreed upon. However, there is one thing that the majority of our citizens expect, that all institutions and programs be premised upon and respect the principle of women's legal, economic and social equality.

As a government we are experiencing the push for such equality from multiple sectors of our society. It would be at our own peril to ignore such directions.

With these imperatives in mind the Ontario Government has made the promotion of the harmonization of work and family responsibilities a very high priority. Simply stated, the concept of balancing work and family responsibilities has, at its base, the notion that the role of the individual as a full participant in both the work-place and the family must be recognized, recognized and enhanced by an environment which understands that both our economic needs and our social needs must be met in order to achieve a productive society capable of meeting the challenges of the 21st Century.

All sectors of the community, employers, workers and care givers, men and women must become involved in active

examination of what we can do to contribute to as full and productive integration of our human needs and responsibilities in both the work and family contexts. The role of government, as we see it, is to help make this happen.

For Ontario it also involves looking at a number of priority issues within the context of harmonizing work and family responsibilities, such things as flexible child care to accommodate the children of working parents, leave provisions and community services to assist those caring for the elderly, for the disabled, for the seriously ill family member. And occupational integration initiatives to promote an environment in the work-place which supports the role of both men and women.

Daily in all sectors of our society we are witnessing the new awareness to the changing roles of men and women. There was evidence in this, I suggest to you, this week in the decision of the Federal Court of Canada that provisions of the Unemployment Insurance Act prohibiting natural fathers from receiving parental leave benefits are indeed discriminatory. In his ruling Mr. Justice Barry Strayer observed that the law has its roots in sex role stereotyping, and he went on to say, and I quote:

> "Equality between parents with respect to responsibility and opportunity for care of a newborn child appears to be most consistent with the values of contemporary Canadian society."

I believe this is indeed an eloquent confirmation of the changing role of parents in Canadian society.

And responding to these changes poses both exciting challenges and possibilities for all of us. Our responsibility as government, as employers, as workers, as parents is to continue to meet these responsibilities, to continue to meet these possibilities, to continue to meet these challenges justly, with intelligence and sensitivity.

I expect that this is what you are going to be undertaking during the course of your conference and I commend you to a very successful conference, and I thank you for inviting me to help launch it and to welcome you all here on behalf of the Government of Ontario.

Thank you all very much.

And now I have one other very important and pleasant task to undertake just before I take my leave of you. There is one member of the Advisory Council who has served us for five years and I have the pleasure, Sandra Manzig, of presenting you with a plaque. So if you could just come up here for a moment.

If I could just say a few words about Sandra's participation. She was appointed to the Council in June of 1983. She is an instructor of French at St. Clair College in Windsor. Through her five years on Council she has sat on various committees including sole support mothers, Francophone women, education,

motherhood and immigrant women.

Sandra, as I think many of you know, is very active in her own community promoting Council through various consultations and various organizations that she participates in the Windsor community.

Sandra, you have really added to the vibrancy of Council. I know that because I know a little bit about your history of your participation. In particular, Sandra has, I believe, pointed out time and again to Council that it needs to be broadly responsive to a variety of communities in this province and particular to the French speaking, the Francophone community. I am not sure that we have gotten as far as we need to go in that regard, Sandra, and I hope that as Council proceeds down the years you will see us more effectively responding to the Francophone community, both in Council's work and its initiatives.

On behalf of the Government of Ontario let me present you with this plaque which reads:

> "In grateful acknowledgment of the contributions, service and dedication to the goal of women's equality in Ontario this is presented to Sandra Manzig who served as a Member of The Ontario Advisory Council on Women's Issues from June, 1983 to June, 1988."

Sandra Manzig: Thank you so much.

Actually, perhaps these are things that sometimes one expects, but it really -- I did not think that I was going to receive such a great honour. Thank you so much, Mr. Sorbara, and thank you so much for all members of Council.

These five years have been really very interesting. It has been a fantastic growing experience for me and I hope that perhaps, as you mentioned, that I have been able to bring something back to my community.

I have mentioned several times in our meetings with Council that unfortunately people in Windsor have the feeling that they are segregated in a way, that they are not really part of Ontario. Sometimes they think that Ontario stops in London. And I think that now the new government, I think, is making tremendous efforts and also is making tremendous efforts in making people feel that no, actually they are still part of Ontario and that great things are going to go take place.

I am very much looking forward to your visit to Windsor in September and I know that Windsor people also are reacting quite positively, particularly young people are looking forward to meeting you personally.

As you said, we do have an awful lot of work to do in the area of francophone women. Very often francophone women have been left a little bit in limbo. They have worked on their own. They have done very good things, but I think that now they need some extra help and it was very rewarding to hear that you are planning on doing something.

Also, let us not forget immigrant women, because immigrant women, again, have suffered -- well, they had to struggle perhaps doubly hard because of the fact that they were away from their communities, from the cultural difference, and so on, and therefore they do need some extra help and I know that you are there to provide it.

Once more, thank you so much also for giving our Council the help that you are giving, because really I think that the Council provides a very good link between associations and between the government and I think that this is very important, a very important link.

So again, it really -- it has been more than a pleasure to be a member of Council and to be able to do something for the Province of Ontario. Thank you so much.

Peut-être j'aurais dû dire aussi quelque chose en français, je ne c'est pas, est ce qu'il y a déjà des gens qui parle français ici?

A peut-être. Bonjour. Bon. Bonjours à tout le monde. Peut-être je vas vous dire quelque choses plus tard. J'espère de toute façon que -- vous avez la traduction simultané -- de toute façon, mais vous savez que le conseil est ici pas seulement pour les femmes anglophones mais aussi pour les femmes francophones et que le conseil est vraiment très intéresser à travailler avec vous. Et bien, merci.

Susan McDonald: Et bien, merci beaucoup. We thank you, Mr. Sorbara, very much for joining us and for reconfirming our mandate.

And I thank you, Sandra, for all your efforts on behalf of the women of Windsor and all your work on Council and for your friendship.

Well, now, shall we get on with it. At this point I would call upon another Council Member, Danielle Coulombe, who will introduce you to our keynote speaker.

DANIELLE COULOMBE
Council Member

Thank you, Susan.

Bernice Martin is a Senior Associate Professor at the University of London, England, where she lectures in Sociology and Women's Studies.

Although most of her research has concentrated on modern popular culture she also has done considerable work on the sociology of religion. She acted as a consultant and lecturer for churches and for several theological colleges. This brought her to undertake a study of young people's beliefs for the Church of England. For five years Bernice was a Member of the Catholic Marriage Advisory Council's Interdenominational Study Group on Human Sexuality.

In 1986 she was a visiting professor at the Southern Methodist University in Dallas, Texas.

Bernice has written two books including, **A Sociology of Contemporary Cultural Change** and contributed to numerous articles and chapters in other publications. Currently, she is completing a book on recent changes in sexual relationships by studying the way that sex is portrayed in the popular culture and the mass media.

Recently she was interviewed on TV Ontario where she presented some very interesting and innovative ideas about housework.

Aside from her responsibilities as a professor, Bernice is a Member of the Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, the Open University Visiting Committee and the Elizabeth Nuffield Education Trust.

Having spent the last 28 years teaching she now plans to concentrate on full time writing and research.

A mother, a grandmother, and active housewife and homemaker, and happily married for 25 years, Bernice says she tried to fit music "in the cracks of a ridiculously busy life."

Before I introduce her to you I would like to read a quote from Bernice which I am sure you will all be in agreement with.

> "The wife tends to be the guardian of time in the house. She's responsible for times of meals, for bedtimes, curfew times. She patrols the boundaries of time...on the other hand her time is not her own...her time belongs to the household."

Please join me in welcoming Bernice Martin.

KEYNOTE ADDRESS: MOTHERS AS FAMILY MANAGERS

BERNICE MARTIN
Senior Associate Professor
University of London, England

Thank you, Danielle, and thank you for your very warm welcome. I feel immensely privileged to be invited to come all the way to this beautiful city to speak to this conference.

I was quite disturbed and distressed by yesterday evening. I went back to my hotel wondering whether I should completely rewrite what I have to say, wondering what had happened in the last 20 years when I thought all kinds of growings up had happened in the world.

I did rewrite what I had to say. I thought I had better take up a slightly different tone from the one I had intended, which was, as it were, sisterly controversy. I think sisterly solidarity is more to the fore in my feelings this morning.

But I do want to talk about an aspect of motherhood which I feel has been unduly neglected in both feminist and anti-feminist talk about the family and motherhood. And I want to talk fundamentally about motherhood as power, because I think the facts that feminism has exposed the whole range of lack of power that women have in modern society, has perhaps slightly tended to allow us to neglect or reject the idea that we do have power in the realm of the home or to regard it as an insignificant power because of the processes of marginalization that the Minister referred to so eloquently this morning.

So my theme is going to be motherhood, and particularly housework as power. And I think it behooves us in a grown up feminist movement to begin to tackle some of the complexities and paradoxes which arise from the fact of motherhood and housewifery and homemaking as a source of power which may often be turned against us by ourselves as well as by others. So that is going to be my theme.

Before I get on to that I would just like to add a couple of footnotes. The first is that much as I found yesterday evening distressing the sense of pain and anger that was around in some of the -- less what was said than in the way that applause was orchestrated yesterday evening.

I felt that this was yet another piece of evidence from my hunch which led me to work on this issue of housewifery and motherhood as power, which is that there is in our society, in all our advance modern societies still an enormously powerful undercurrent of fear of the power of women. And sometimes the fear is in us as well as in our opponents, and by opponents I mean those who are unwilling to hear what feminists have to say in their defence of women and their choices and their control of their own lives.

So I think it behooves us to take this fear of women's power very seriously, not to dismiss it, not to regard it simply as

an anachronism, something from the prehistoric age, as a real fear based on a real phenomenon.

And, as I said, I think that feminism has grown up, is growing up, and the sort of caricature that I heard yesterday I no longer recognize. And by growing up I mean that we are now capable of dealing with ambiguity and paradox without feeling that the very recognition of ambiguity and paradox somehow undermines us from the beginning. And it is these areas of ambiguity and paradox about the domestic power of women on which I want to concentrate.

But first my footnotes about the context. The title of this conference is **Motherhood in a Changing Society.** Now, much of what I would have said has happily already been said by the Minister and I want only to add a couple of very short footnotes to that.

The first is partly in refutation to some of the, I think, wrong cause of inferences yesterday evening. It is quite true that there are some very big changes occurring in the societies in which we live. It is becoming normal for married women to spend most of their adult life in paid employment.

Birth rates are lower so that in most of the western world we are now below reproduction rate, which for most societies, especially a dense society like England, is no hardship at all.

We are also suffering from heavily increasing divorce rates and the consequences of that for women are very double-edged indeed. And the notion that any of these things, women working, lower birth rate and rising divorce rates can in any simple sense be attributed to feminism seems to me to be errant nonsense. There is no research that I know of that can do anything more than suggest that at the margin the existence of a feminist movement which has given certain kinds -- or has helped to give certain kinds of new rights to women does more than simply add one tiny smidgen of causation to these phenomena. And insofar as it does it is in assuring women who find their marriages intolerable that there is life outside, that they can survive, that they might be able to cope alone. So I would like to begin by saying I do not accept the hypothesis that feminism is in any serious sense responsible for these phenomena, but that these phenomena are not easily going to go away. So motherhood in the '90s and towards the end of the century is probably going to have to exist within a context in which these trends continue, high levels of single parenthood, for example.

And I would add as a slight gloss there, that one of the things that is often forgotten is not simply that single parenthood affects increasing proportions, 50-60 per cent of your children -- similar proportions in Britain, even larger proportions in the United States -- but that the remarriage possibilities of those single parents are getting slimmer and slimmer. If you look at the demographic figures for the United States, for example -- I am afraid I do not know the Canadian figures -- you will find that typically after divorce a man will remarry a younger woman, not a woman of his own

generation.

So that the last statistic that I saw, dating from maybe six months ago, about the United States was that in the age groups above 30 there was a considerable surplus of women, as it were, in the marriage market. Not all, of course, looking for husbands, but never the less, demographically there in the technical marriage market. But the time you got to age 40 there were 106 per cent more women than men in that newly single category potentially looking for mates.

Now, this is a phenomenon as women that we need to take account of that after divorce and in the condition of single parenthood fewer and fewer of us are going to remarry if we do not do it quickly in our early 30s, crudely, and when our children are very young.

And these are phenomena that it behooves us to take some account of, that this business of the breakup of families is by no means only hard for the men who lose contact and custody of their children, though that is hard, I do not in any way doubt. But these are complex phenomena that we have to look at from all angles and not simply to express our pain in condemnation of some kind of scapegoat.

I would perhaps slightly frivolously add that if I were a lawyer, which I am not, I think one of the things I would be doing, whether I were a feminist or an anti-feminist lawyer, would be drawing up a model contract for all those women who quite properly have the right to choose to become full time homemakers on marriage. But that contract would guarantee them compensation for potential loss of earnings at the point at which between one-third and one-half of them find their marriages breaking down and they left with no skills with which to confront the labour market.

So those are some brief, painful reflections, in a way, on some of the things that went through my mind last night after the session, after the debate on whether feminism was good for families or not, and some reflections on what it is that is setting the conditions for motherhood in the 21st Century.

But now I want to go on to this issue of motherhood as power and I want to start with two brief stories. The first is a film I saw recently and it is a modern Russian film called **Farewell** and I found it an enormously eloquent image of a point that I had been trying to make about housework as a fantastically important ritual function which creates order and meaning for whole families, which creates a sense that the world is a safe place for the children, for husband, for partner, for the self.

This film is about an old peasant woman in a village which is about to be flooded by a dam. And all the peasant families are being re-housed in perfectly adequate accommodation. She is not in poverty, she is not going to be physically deprived of a home. But she, of course, has lived in one house for all of her life, and she is an old lady, and she is very reluctant to leave it. And her neighbours persuaded her that she must go, she must take leave of this place where her whole life has

existed. And she says "I must do one more thing. I must clean my house." And the whole film is the story of what she does.

At the end of that film I felt I understood for the first time the biblical phrase "swept and garnished" when the house was swept and garnished. She polishes, she cleans, she puts all the kitchen utensils in place and her neighbours catch the fever, as it were, and they help her.

And the climax of the film is where they all go into the countryside and gather enormous armsful of wild flowers to put into all the bowls and basins in the home, and it is shining and beautiful, and then she can take her farewell. And she leaves this home in perfect ritual order and she goes away, not happy, but satisfied that she has, as it were, satisfied the gods of the hearth in a quite primal sort of way. She has left it perfect. She has swept and garnished it and then it can be the sacrifice to progress and she can go with ease.

My other story is much more personal and it is true, and I find it slightly ironic and very sad that the work I have done on housework has been stimulated by the terminal illness of two friends, two women friends. And the second story relates to a friend who is currently suffering from terminal cancer and who is quite literally setting her house in order in her last months of life.

This is a friend who was a Jewish refugee, whose parents and grandparents died in Auschwitz. And she came to England as a young adolescent. And when she had had this awful cancer operation she came home and I was looking after her. She has no family. Her marriage broke up, she has no children. And she said "I want to tell you some things that I have never told anyone." And she told me what happened when the Gestapo came and literally broke up her parents household.

She said "I want to explain to you because I want you to know why I am making the will that I am making and I want you to do some housework for me.

When this occurred Marion's family were invaded by young men from the Gestapo who had been at school with her -- they were three or four years older than she was -- and they slit the duvets and they broke up the bed and they put an axe to the furniture. And she said "I have never told anyone this and I thought I had forgotten it, but I now remember why I would not make a home for myself, because when this happened my mother cried through the house "my dowry, my dowry," and I said to myself I am never going to put my soul into physical possessions the way that my mother has. They are destroyed part of her being because they are destroyed her possessions. I will never have possessions like that."

So she had no possessions and she did not make a house and she did not make a home and she lived out of suitcases until she was well into her 40s when her marriage broke up. And then she made a little home for herself, quite deliberately from cheap materials, from disposable objects that were of no intrinsic value so that her identity could not be located in

these physical things that could be burned or destroyed.

But when she became very ill she said "I am making a will. I am making a feminist will and I have shocked my lawyer because I have said that after my funeral I want all my friends to come in and take any of my possessions which are of any use or interest to them." And her lawyer said "You cannot do that. Who will decide who are your friends?" And she said "My friends know who they are. They will come. They will know. They will know what to do with these things." And he said "But anyone might come in from the street." "Good" she said "then if there are things that these people need they may take them.

"But" she said to me "there is a mark on my kitchen table. I want you to clean it off for me. I want you to get a ring away process that will make it perfect, because although none of these things are of any value, intrinsic value, I want them to be perfect when they are given away."

And I think that these two stories, both of which I find very profound and moving, are part of my own feeling about making a home, about homemaking.

And I think that one of the mistakes we have made, both within and outside feminism, is in assuming that the value of homemaking is basically an economic value. Of course it is. And of course things like the wages for housework movement and the argument that women's work, the work of the home, the labour of love is invisible because it is unpaid. Of course all those things are true.

But what I want to suggest is that even in the labels that we have taken to give non-pejorative meanings to homemaking and housework we have tended to take on an over economistic kind of notion about what housework is about and that we have forgotten that housework is partly about making the world safe for ourselves and our children, creating ritual order, the sweeping and burnishing, the daily routine of making the world safe, of making order out of chaos, of recreating, if not beauty certainly some kind of sense of comfort out of the constant depredations of daily familial living. So that when we call homemakers home managers we are taking on the image of the office and of management.

I want to talk about homemaking as a ritual priesthood. As the priest -- we are the priestesses of order. And I think this is something that has been seriously neglected in our concerns to show the extent to which the marginalization is oppressive.

And if I can use a phrase which comes, in fact, from a French song -- it is actually a phrase which is, in context it is a girl lamenting for her lover who has gone away to the wars and she describes -- she says "Toute ma joie et mon ennui." "All my joy and all my..." -- this untranslatable French word, which I do not need to translate for a Canadian audience -- "...my oppression, my boredom, my weariness, my concern, my duty." "Toute ma joie and mon ennui."

That is my experience of motherhood, that the most profound experiences of having children and of having this, if you like, the ritual priestess role of keeping the world safe for the family through this burnishing and garnishing as well as the nurture.

All of that as well as the marginalization and the oppression and the lack of time and the fact that there is always chaos, the fact that I am not a house proud person at all. I cannot be. If you have a full time job you cannot afford the kind of house proudness which can become an obsession in itself.

But I do understand the enormous ritual importance of housewifery and I want to suggest that we have images other than economic ones of the value of motherhood and housework.

And I say this not simply to, as it were, make a debating point, because I think it is important for a whole series of reasons. It is important not because women should be holding onto it, but partly because it explains why they find it so hard to let it go.

It may be heretical, but I would like to suggest that there are elements in the way that we are brought up to become mothers and housewives that make it very hard for us to let go of even tedious domestic chores. And I would suggest that one of the reasons why there is very much less change in the gender distribution of the domestic division of labour, is not only the unwillingness of men, though it is partly that, but it is also that this is the one sphere in which women ritually do have control.

I know it took me many, many years to recognize this, but I realized that I was actually preventing my husband from helping me, that I was actually keeping him on the fringe of the domestic world by hogging to myself, by taking to myself all the tedious little chores through which most fundamentally I make my relationship with my children and with the household and through which I created this ritual order of the household.

And I suddenly caught myself one day being utterly out of -- not out of character, I am a very irritable person, but my irritation had gone over the top because I found my husband had polished the floor in the sitting room and, having polished the floor, he then started to clean out the hearth and, of course, all the dust and ash was everywhere on the polished floor. And I thought, this is crazy, this is why I take over these chores. He does not do them in the right order.

And, of course, it is nothing to do with the rationality of cleaning out the hearth and sweeping out the corners before you put on the Hoover. "Shall I Hoover for you, dear?" he says. For me, of course, I mean this is -- but that is also part of my control. And I say "No, no, no, I have not done the preparations. You have got to empty all the bins first and you must sweep out the corners and you really must tidy up before you Hoover." Now, why should you? Why should you?

But my sense of this garnishing and burnishing, like this peasant woman, is somehow to do with the sequencing of it and to do with my control over the sequencing. Delighted if you do it but he must do it in my order. I am learning slowly, but it is very hard. And I began to suspect that this was one of the features that we all are guilty of.

And I was delighted when I discovered the other day in a very interesting book by an English socialist feminist called Lee Lynn Segal, **Is the Future Female, Troubled Thoughts on Contemporary Feminism** that she was beginning to have these kinds of thoughts about mothering, not yet about housework, and she quotes in her book a very interesting little passage from a woman who -- a feminist who is not a biological parent and who had had the dreadful experience of mothering children who were then taken away from her and taken back to their biological parents. And this woman wrote this:

> "I know something about what you get back for doing that. That is motherhood. And part of what I know is that you get a sense of power, strangely, not just over the child, though I do think there is nothing adults can do about the fact that children are relatively helpless and dependant on countless decisions we make for them, but also in relation to other adults. Mothers are oppressed by male dominated society in so many ways as non-mothers. But I suggest that many feminists who are now choosing to have children want to have some area of life, child care, where they will have the last word, where the importance of their position as the one and only mom is assured."

Now, I read on through this book because I thought, wonderful. Now I can talk about this whole housework thing without getting myself into terrible arguments with all my feminist friends. But she does not in fact extend it to housework. I want to extend it to housework. But I do think it is very important that we are beginning to recognize that this area of mothering and child care is a sphere of power which is enormously important to us.

And what I want to argue this morning, and what I have argued in print elsewhere, is that there are two aspects to this power, domestic power of women. The first is the ritual power that I have just talked about, the power of symbolically keeping the world safe and ordered for the rest of the family.

But then I also want to argue that there are some quite technical powers that we have. We have power over time, over the territory of the household and over the resources of the household. And I think this is true even to some degree in cases where the women are simply given a housekeeping allowance by husbands, where they do not have the kind of control that I have with a joint account which my husband leaves the whole of the financial management to me. I do not know, perhaps, whether that is my doing too.

I remember my grandmother, who was a working class woman in a cotton town in North Lancashire. She had 18 children, of whom only 12 survived, and all her daughters, because it was, of course, the daughters who survived. All the males died but

one. That was the demography of the period, why we had the surplus women and the first women's movement.

But I remember my grandmother standing at her front door with her inevitably distended belly, after 18 pregnancies, and an enormous apron across this belly, with about 12 different pockets, and that was the family treasury. And as her husband came home from work, and all her daughters and her son came home from work, they gave her their wage packets unopened. She stowed them in her apron and she doled out spending money to them.

Now, there are women still like that. I am afraid I control the family finances in exactly that way, but I know there are many women who do not. So I am not trying to sentimentalize this control of the resources, but I will explain what I mean in a moment.

Now, the reason why I think it is important for us as feminists and as women concerned with the role of women in this society to recognize our domestic power is because: (a) I think it is something we have failed to recognize, and truth is always better than fiction in my book; and (b) I think it is part of the very, very difficult sexual dynamic in families which we then interpret in other ways. I have found myself time and time again, especially in the early stages of my marriage, interpreting my husband's anger with me as a failure of his love for me when, in fact, it was an angry response to my control within the domestic world. And it took me 20 years to recognize this.

Now, I think therefore that this propensity of women to interpret anger from children and spouses, partners, at their domestic control, the kind of anger I was hearing and feeling in this room last night, their control of the children, their control -- their monopoly of motherhood, something, thank heavens, that feminists have begun to teach the rest of the world is how to share parenting, and full marks for that, but not wholly recognizing still the power of the mother in the household, I think causes women to interpret, as I did for many years, something which is in fact a pathology of my own power, which is a pathology because I do not recognize it as power and I see the response of my sons and my husband who want to retreat from my power, escape from it, go elsewhere. I see that as a rejection of my love when in fact it is a perfectly understandable need to escape from my power.

I inherited a stepson when I married 25 years ago and I spent 10 years in a battle with him about food. And finally, finally, finally, I understood. There was no way I could win that battle, but unfortunately there was no way he could win either. Food was the area of contest over power.

His grandmother who had brought him up to the point at which I took over had always made special food for him. He never ate what anyone else in the household ate. And, as a rationalist, I came in and said "This is nonsense, he is going to eat what the rest of us eat." Well, you can imagine what happened. It did not work.

And I found myself, of course, doing exactly what grandma had done, I cooked him special dishes. And still there were more and more and more problems over this. And I realized, he now eats anything. I mean, he is the most omniferous creature in the world. He learned to cook for himself no less.

But a child who had been battled over by two sets of possessive grandparents takes this area of nurture and fights them with it for control. It is about control over his own body, it is about control over his own will.

And there was no way that either of us could win that battle over food because if I insisted that he was to eat what the rest of the family ate then food and nurture became an area of battle. If I did not and made him what he wanted I was repossessing that area, that contested area of food.

Now, I know so many households in which this happens and unfortunately I think in some ways it is one of the things that explains why so many teenagers are doing exactly the things that their health conscious parents generation have given up, drinking, smoking, drugs and the rest of it. If instead of nurture you must eat as much as you can I will kill you with cholesterol, as it were, which was the '50s habit that I grew up with, nurture meant giving everybody what they could not have during the war or when you were poor. Now nurture means you are not to have that cholesterol. I am to lock up all these resources to prevent you from doing yourself damage. I am not surprised that we have food rebellions, as it were in some of the younger generation.

In England we have major problems over the levels of young adolescent females smoking and drinking, for example, and I think it is part of this syndrome of possessing, the mother taking the moral authority to possess this area of you are what you eat and you eat what mother says you eat.

Okay, so it is a power problem. And my reason for being concerned with it, therefore, is that I do not think that we will understand the dynamic of the sex war even in the best regulated families and the most loving of relationships until we come into the open and recognize that this fear of domestic life is this fear of power. And if we constantly disguise this fact from ourselves we are constantly going to misinterpret what goes on within the dynamics of the family, and that in itself is something to do with divorce rates.

Although, again, if I could just give an aside, a gloss, a footnote, it seems to me one of the wilder absurdities in suggesting that feminism has caused the rise in divorce rates. If you look at the correlation between divorce rates and economic difficulty you find, for example, that in periods of severe economic stress, and I am hearing from one of your Council members, in severe farming stress the divorce rate goes up.

In England I know the statistics show that unemployment increases the divorce rate double. So at every class and educational and skill level the unemployed have a divorce rate twice as high as their equivalent employed population.

Financial stress is one of the reasons. But I think also that this misunderstanding of the inner dynamics of families in a society which is increasingly family oriented, this is the paradox of -- here we live in the western world in societies with enormously high and increasing rates of divorce, but we are also societies which are uniquely family focussed and home focussed.

So the inner politics, if you like, the inner dynamics of the home have never been as important as they are today if we want to understand what is going wrong in those families that do go wrong.

Okay, so women's power, domestic power is something worth considering.

So very, very quickly, the three areas that I want to talk about, time, territory and resources.

Now, I am not in the least against the division of domestic labour and I am slightly heartened by some recent work that have suggested that the longer women are in paid employment the more the division of domestic labour begins to equalize. It take many years, but it is the one factor that makes some difference to the division of domestic labour.

Now, what I partly want to say is that if we take domestic labour -- not mothering. Nobody is in any difficulty about recognizing mothering is terribly important, the nurture side of it -- but the physical chores. If we take them as purely secular things, if you like, as purely nuisance value things that have got to be got over in the fastest possible way, we are going to misunderstand this process of power and control and ritual order and be in danger of running into all kinds of self-defeating strategies within our division of domestic labour if we do not recognize it for the important area of power that it really is.

So the lesson I am reading this morning, if you like, is based on a model which is of the housewife doing all these things, but that does not mean that I think the housewife should do all those things. I think they should be shared throughout the family and some of the pathologies of power will actually evaporate if we start to do that. But we will not be able to do it successfully until we recognize that they are areas of power. All right.

So what does the homemaker do? Control over time. This is something that Danielle mentioned that I feel quite strongly about. One of the intractable problems that mother usually has is control of everybody's time schedules. And when she also has a tight time schedule this is often very, very tough. And very often these time schedules are actually inextricable because they overlap and they contradict and they conflict so she then has to make the time priorities, who has to be got out of the house first, who has got to be ferried and who has to go under their own steam, and so on.

What she also does is to, what I have called moralize the time boundaries of the household so that she can say when the

timing of meals are or when the ritual points at which the whole family comes together. For my family it is Sunday lunchtime. The rest of the week is chaos but Sunday lunchtime is sacred where we all come together as a family.

And the time deadlines of this kind which mother can moralize are a tremendously important source of power. She cannot control what the members of the family do outside the household, but she can say "Well, you said you were coming home at such and such and I had your meal ready. I was terribly worried." And from this to moral blackmail on our nearest and dearest is an awfully short trip. And it is the only weapon we have got, because we cannot control what they do outside. But we can say "I expect you at X and if you do not come I have the right to be worried and I have the right to impose my particular kind of moralized time boundary on you."

This one backfires on us all the time. It behooves us to look at it, examine it and be very careful indeed about it.

The other thing about time, as I think Danielle said in quoting me, is that in a way we are also martyrs to time and I find myself over and over again slipping into the martyrdom role, copying my mother and my grandmother and feeling very, very pleased with myself about patting myself on the back at how much I do for my family and how little gratitude I get.

The martyrdom syndrome I think is one that we really ought to look at and think about, and, unfortunately, it is ever so easy whether you are feminist or anti-feminist, because we really have been martyrs for many, many years and we find it very hard to take time for ourselves.

And I am very, very interested in some of the analyses of why women read Harlequin Romances for example. So many of them say, "Well, it is a time to myself. I can -- nothing can get at me when I am reading a Harlequin. It is my time." So, as it were, she becomes invisible. She switches off from other people's time.

But whereas other people in the household have leisure time the woman, whether she is a full time homemaker or a worker in the paid labour force, then leisure time is her heaviest working hours. They are having leisure, she is doing all the heavy work of the household because they are around disturbing the order as it were. And we very easily make martyrs of ourselves over this one because everyone else has leisure time. Their leisure time is our heaviest work time.

Territory too. We forget that we control the territory of the household and territory and resources to a large extent go together. I became aware of the, if you like, the territorial power very, very slowly and it occurred to me that precisely those things which are our heaviest oppression in housework, all that cleaning up the disgusting mess, washing the clothes, digging out the stained panties from the corners of the wardrobes, and all of these things.

The labour of the outcast of the harijan, if you like, the unclean labour is also the source of our knowledge. We know exactly what goes on in all the rooms of the household. We know who is menstruating, who has had nocturnal emissions, who has had a surreptitious smoke, who has been raiding the fridge, whether there has been beer around in the house, even where there has been marijuana or whatever else. We know. We are detectives whether we like it or not and it is this menial labour that gives us this power.

And I said in the paper I wrote on housework "The housewife is her own CGB and CIA. She is the detective who knows exactly what delinquencies have occurred in the household. Even if she does -- even if her only control is moral, is comment, or just the fact that the children or the husband knows that she goes through his pockets, because of course she has got to wash his handkerchiefs and she just happens to come across this or that. I mean, this is the stuff of anti-feminist -- or patriarchal humour, if you like. But I think we ought to look at patriarchal humour because there is a kind of truth there that we maybe need to recognize.

And the resources. I remember the days during the war when many of the cupboards were literally locked in the places where I grew up amongst a very poor working class community and the women controlled the keys to where the food was kept. So I am not talking necessarily about who decides whether we buy on high purchase a new Toyota or whether we get the microwave or the new bathroom. I am not just talking about that, I am talking about the housewife as the controller of scarce resources as well as the resources of affluence.

And the creator of the style of the household too, so that everything, if you like, from class and political messages that come across from households are usually the creation of the housewife.

I have a number of students who have despaired of ever getting academic posts and who have instead gone into market research. And they operate on the basis, for example, that the different rooms of the house are either the husband's or the wife's. It must be true because they make money out of making that assumption. The commercial world needs to know who controls which aspects of buying.

So I think again, despite of all that feminism has shown about the powerlessness of women we must address this issue of who decides and how what resources exist within the household and who has access to them.

Coming from a very permissive kind of big working class family I had not realized that there was what is in England a lower middle class style of control in which children are not allowed to go to the cupboards and the fridges. I only discovered it when I found that all the adolescent locusts of the neighborhood stripped my kitchen day after day until I said "Why do you not go and get such and such from your own...?" "Oh, but my mom does not allow me just to take my friends and take things out of the fridge."

Now, that is the kind of control I am talking about, that we do have these things in our function and it is time we took them seriously. I mean, I have been flippant and we have, as it were, been allowed to be sisters together and laugh at ourselves a bit.

I think maybe we should laugh at ourselves a bit more, but also take my underlying point seriously, that it is not just motherhood, it is also housewifery, homemaking, which has this enormously powerful control function. Because, after all, our children become the people they are, and to a large extent our partners become the people they are, in response to the way that we exercise these powers within our homes and families. And I think it is time we addressed them.

I want to finish very, very briefly by reading you a short poem by a Canadian woman writer who has written a lovely volume of poems called **The Martha Landscapes**. I want to be Mary and Martha, but I am really making a plea for Martha this morning.

This is called **My Grandmother's Sugar Shell, Ontario Baroque.**

> "My grandmother's sugar shell teaspoon, Ontario baroque, has just fallen out of the unclean silver bag. What does it mean I wonder?"
>
> "One day only I saw her stop work. We lay out on the grass by the highway under the big Maple and two cars went by toward Owen Sound. When she heard their car coming for dinner she got up, a big woman with Scottish shoulders, built too heavy on the top like all of the Stuarts. Her leg bones stilt-like in proportion to the square rest of her."
>
> "And she rose all of a piece. I remember that she rose up somehow straight and not hinging her knees nor using her hands nor her elbows, nor leaning her head forward so that she was the reverse of a tree falling before a quick gust, that is, she rose on a slant as if pulleys were attached to her everywhere, or as if the kitchen wood stove were a magnet that suddenly drew her inside. One minute she was all green and gold lying there dappled, the next she was halfway up the lawn and in motion over the steps. The door opened magically and she disappeared."
>
> "She would never wonder about anything, just say "That spoon needs cleaning" and yet I think it means she needs remembering."

I think all our mothers and grandmothers need remember for cleaning the spoons and ourselves. Thank you.

Danielle Couloumbe: I would like to thank Bernice for this very interesting presentation. I think that I will express everyone's feeling in saying, Bernice, you have presented us with a very innovative ideas. I am sure that they will be of great help in stimulating and furthering our reflection on housework, on women and power and on the dynamics of power in the family.

PANEL ON: SOCIETY'S VIEWS OF MOTHERHOOD

MODERATOR: SANDRA MANZIG
Council Member

PANELISTS:

Jean Augustine. Jean Augustine is the Principal at St. Gregory's Elementary School in Etobicoke. She has extensive community involvement and serves on several boards including the Catholic Children's Aid Society, Metro Toronto Housing, Urban Alliance on Race Relations and the Ontario Judicial Council. She is also the National President of the Congress of Black Women of Canada.Her expertise in the area of multiculturalism, race relations and women's issues is reflected in the numerous consultations, collaborative writings, speaking engagements and workshops that she has participated in. Jean received the YWCA Woman of Distinction Award in 1987.

Judy Posner. Judy Posner is an Associate Professor at York University in the Sociology Department at Atkinson College. During the past decade her research has been focussed on developing a variety of slide presentations dealing with the issue of Media Literacy and Images of Women. Judy's exhibit **Brutality Chic**, which is a 22-image poster of eroticized violent images in magazine advertising is used by Education Wife Assault to accompany their presentations in the community. Two other copies of the exhibit are housed at Media Watch and York University. Among other committees Judy was a member of the Advertising Advisory Board Subcommittee on Sex Role Stereotyping from 1981-1984 and is currently a board member of Media Watch, a Feminist Advocacy Organization.

Manon Vennat. Manon is the Vice-President of SpencerStuart, an international executive-search firm. In 1972 she founded **le Centre de linguistique de l'entreprise**, a language consulting service and served as its Executive Director until 1980. Before moving on to SpencerStuart Manon was Vice-President of Administration, General Counsel and Secretary to the Board of Directors of AES Data. Elected as the first woman President of the Montreal Board of Trade in 1986 Manon became the Board's Chair in May of last year. Her other activities include Member of the Executive Committee of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, Vice-President of the Frontier College Learning Foundation and Director of Bio-Mega Incorporated., E-L Corporation and McGraw-Hill Ryerson Limited. Manon has been quoted as saying that she

Harriet Rosenberg. Harriet Rosenberg is a Professor at York University in the Department of Social Science. She has taught numerous courses on women and the family including, **The Family; Crisis and Critique; On Woman; Women, Culture and Society; Childhood, Family and the Community; and Sex/Gender Systems and the Family.** In 1986 she co-authored the book **Through The Kitchen Window: The Politics of Home and Family.** Her most recent book **A Negotiated World: Three Centuries of Change in a French Alpine Village** was published earlier this year. Harriet has participated in many conferences and symposiums that have taken her throughout Canada and the United States.

Lois Wilson. The Very Reverend Dr. Lois Wilson, presently Co-Director of Ecumenical Forum of Canada, a centre for research, dialogue and study on the work of the churches in the world, and one of seven Presidents of the World Council of Churches. Lois was the first woman to have served as moderator of the United Church of Canada and President of the Canadian Council of Churches. She serves on general boards including Canadian Association for Adult Education, Canadian Institute for International Peace and Security, Refugee Status Advisory Committee and Amnesty International. Her focus of work has been human rights, mission, international affairs, peace, and dialogue and relationships with various communities. In 1984 Lois received the Order of Canada.

JEAN AUGUSTINE

Principal
St. Gregory's Elementary School, Etobicoke

Thank you, and I will address from an educational standpoint information or lack thereof that is presented concerning motherhood.

The dictionary defines motherhood as the state of being a mother, that is giving birth, loving, caring for and teaching another human being how to live in this world.

We prepare in schools our young women for just about everything except the topic motherhood. Harrison, the author of **The Shock of Motherhood**, says:

> "It is the one career for which you cannot prepare and the one career whose skills are obsolete the day you master them, the one career that can enrich your life beyond all expectations."

What is it like to be a mother? How does society prepare us for motherhood?

I asked a number of girls in my school within the last little while about their notions of motherhood. Their responses were, in typical fashion: "What do you mean? What is that?" And then I said: "You know, mother." And, of course, they responded with a definition or a description of their mother and their mother's relationship to them.

As I asked young girls about motherhood I found out that they still believe that they will get married and have children. I further questioned: "How do you see motherhood affecting your life?" and their responses went something like this: "I will have one or two children, a successful career as a lawyer, or something, and, of course, be very, very happy!" The reality of motherhood is really not in the thinking of our present young people.

There are grape vine information passed from women to women, from young girl to young girl. There are "secrets" about motherhood and how mothering affects a woman's sexuality or relationship or career, but mothering seems to be done in isolation. It seems, as I speak with young girls, that it is almost a second rate occupation, "I will do something and I will be a mother. I will be a mother and then I will do something else."

In **Mothers Talking**, Frances Well Burck speaks of an inevitable order which reflects the passages in mother's lives. And she talks about how "childbirth" initiates women into the community of mothers. It is the first right of passage and the others follow: nurturing a child through the pre-school years; navigating a son or a daughter through school and around the land mines of drugs, sex and suicide; and letting go at some stage and seeing the child marry and have children

of their own. Then they take care of their own mother and finally they're being taken care of by their own children. Those she sees as stages, a journey.

That journey is a familiar one, yet for each and every one of us the trip is different. Yet, there are common threads. As I listen to the plenary speaker some of the instances that she used were very real and very much part of my own experience.

How then does education prepare a young woman for this mothering? Can we teach the secrets of being a "good" mother? And what are those common threads of individual experiences as each woman invents motherhood for herself and tries to figure it out? It seems to me that since being a good mother is doing what she is capable of doing under the circumstances that she confronts, and those circumstances are hers alone and not directly transferrable to anyone else. And maybe presenting a specific curriculum on motherhood becomes problematic.

We follow the specifications of the Ontario Academic Credit. (The Ontario Academic Credit comes from the Ministry of Education and defines the curriculum that has to be taught in specific areas.)

The document defines "Family Studies" as helping "to prepare students for both employment and post-secondary education. It should also give students "self-confidence, interpersonal skills and awareness that they will need in order to function well in a family context and manage their own family life in a climate of societal, cultural, technological and scientific change."

Basic to the definition above is what the "family" means in this document. The family is "a social unit of interacting persons who make commitments, assume responsibilities, nurture each other, become socialized, transmit cultural and religious values and share resources over time." And this is really the information presented to all young people in education.

Reference is also made of the family life cycle consisting of the following stages: the young single, the newly married couple, the family with young children, the family with adolescent children, the family in later life. These are some of the units that the boys and girls study. Nowhere in the document is the word motherhood used.

In Grade 7 the students are taught a core unit entitled "Families in Our Community" where they explore various kinds of family structure, they investigate the functions of families, they compare family customs and traditions within their community, they talk about the extended family, the single parent family, et cetera.

In Grade 8 the course consists of five core units, one dealing with parenting; family; housing; food and clothing.

It is in the core unit on parenting that youngsters will discuss individuals roles of each family member. It is in this discussion of parenting that teachers would touch on

motherhood and, of course, fatherhood issues.

Grade 11 and 12 students again pursue the topic parenting. This time the four units speak to the preparation for parenting, parenting throughout the life cycle, styles of parenting, child development within contemporary families.

It is at that Ontario Academic Credit level where they get into the independent studies. And there they could investigate theories and conceptual frameworks which contribute to a great understanding of the family and its needs. And the student can take the topic of motherhood and pursue that as an independent study.

The family studies program, of course, must meet certain criteria, the goals of education of the province. It must be equally relevant to young men as to young women since they are taught in co-ed situation. It is therefore the expectation that all courses be planned for those co-ed classes and contain a balance of references to the needs and perceptions of men and women.

Thank you.

JUDY POSNER

Associate Professor, Sociology Department
York University, Atkinson College

I would like to thank Bernice Martin for legitimizing both my own life and the talk that I am going to present to you.

When I was first asked to participate in this conference by speaking on the portrayal of motherhood in the media, specifically TV, I was intrigued. Although I have look at monitoring the media for images of women in advertising and other areas I have never looked specifically at motherhood and it seemed rather exciting.

But after mulling the topic over for awhile I panicked. The more I thought about the topic the more I became concerned about the potential paucity of data -- in short, the absence, or at least the secondary status of moms in the media; specifically in the domestic sit com where we might well expect to find her. In fact I started to worry about whether I could actually find enough to say about the topic because moms are so singularly almost spectacularly invisible.

So the title of my talk this morning is **"WHERE'S MOM? From Nurturer to Nothing: The Portrayal of Motherhood in The Domestic Sit Com.** And in the time that is allotted me, I am going to attempt a brief overview of the issue and comment a little bit on why we have such a peculiar state of affairs. And in this light it will connect up very nicely, I think, to some of Bernice's comments earlier.

Before addressing the sit com however, it is worth noting that it is also hard to find other genre in the mass media that explicitly address the topic of motherhood -- save a few women's magazines, filled with helpful hints and a few isolated satirical writers and cartoonists; like the cartoon you have in your conference kit by Lynn Johnson or work of Irma Bombeck.

I think the overall message is fairly loud and clear: Moms and motherhood activities are basically boring. Yet, when males indulge in these same activities, we are both intrigued and entertained. Nowhere is this fact more eloquently revealed than in the recent box office smash hit **Three Men and a Baby.** A traditional male bonding film if there ever was one. An extended joke based on male maternal incompetence, thus brilliantly reinforcing gender stereotyping while at the same time emphasizing the replacability of the mother (Mind you, at the least the film acknowledges that it takes three males and then some to do the work of one woman.)

None of this is really surprising I suppose when you consider that the American film is really a remake of a French farce and that the French, of course, are even more sexist than we are, not that I did not laugh, but my seven year old daughter laughed a lot harder, which tells us something about the depth of the humour.

Or we can turn to the more serious predecessor of such a movie **Kramer vs. Kramer**, which is probably the first Hollywood film to really explore the contemporary father's nurturing capabilities. Its humour and poignancy is similarly based on gender stereotyping. Can you imagine a rapt audience watching a mother make her child breakfast or doing anything else for that matter? Can you imagine such laughter, respect, even adulation? Added to this the "good daddy, bad mommy" tone of the film and we get a glimpse of contemporary trends. Which brings me to my main contention of changing sex roles in the media.

In these days of the gender revolution male roles are being developed and expanded but perhaps at the expense of the females -- in this instance, at the expense of mom.

In a twisted turn of feminist fate contemporary media seems to be giving rise to more and more depictions of father/child relationships based on the usurping, even the obliteration, of the female maternal role, reminiscent then of Molly Haskell's excellent treatise on gender portrayal in the cinema called **From Reverence to Rape** moms have gone from nurturer to nothing.

On to the sit com: (Just a brief note here, I am not going to differentiate between American and Canadian content because we are so totally dominated by American sit coms that the Canadian ones are barely worth mentioning in this regard, especially the family ones.)

Nowhere is the trend that I am referring to better revealed than in the numerous sit coms in which male housekeeper nannies organize and manage a variety of traditional and reconstituted families, reconstituted like orange juice. It is a strange phrase.

The most dramatic of these, of course, is **Who's the Boss** in which a lay back working class Italian male mothers his own child and indeed the entire household of a workaholic, Wasp, female, high-power advertising executive. This show is the most complete and intense role reversal imaginable, except for one inescapable fact. Even though Judith Light's character is superior educationally, intellectually and economically Tony is in charge -- he is the boss. This added to the sexual tension in the series which is carefully maintained between them keeps the show going.

Moreover it is Tony's warm, nurturing Italian -- and I might add feminine characteristics -- contrasted with his employers conservative, inexpressive, almost masculine demeanour that reveals to us the old cliché that if women do it is boring and wimpy, but if men do it it is terrific.

Tony wanders around the house in an apron, carrying a duster, talking with his hands and wearing his heart on his sleeve, but since he is masculine, musclebound and complete with tatoo, on him it looks good. So while on the surface of it **Who's the Boss** might appear to support the new ideal of the working woman it really supports male dominance and emasculates the little power that mom once had. And this

again ties in very nicely with Bernice's point.

A slightly different version of the same theme is the highly successful **Mr. Belvedere** in which a middle aged male English servant rescues an intact but apparently incompetent family comprised of a boring and inconsequential mother and an authoritarian, pig-headed father. Sort of a middle class **All In The Family** mediated by British civility. Once again the mother's traditional role is usurped by a professional presence, and a male one at that.

Neither do I mean to give the impression that these professionally manned families are merely the result of new trends. The '60s series **A Family Affair** starring Sebastian Cabot reflects a similar theme. He looks after the children of a Manhattan widower. **My Three Sons** starring Fred McMurray in which a grandfather and later an uncle help look after a household of three boys, thus creating an all male club environment. What is peculiar, however, about the number of male managers depicted in sit coms, is that in reality such reconstitutions are very rare indeed.

There are also some more credible motherless families in which female substitutes are coerced or hired to do the mother work, the **Courtship of Edie's Father, Make Room for Daddy**, in which Danny Thomas, after he becomes widowed, marries one of his housekeepers, and a more recent American show in this regard I **Married Dora** in which a man marries a housekeeper to bring her into the country. She is an immigrant.

And then there is **Andy Griffith of Mayberry** who summons the aid of rotund Aunt Bee to help do the nurturing and bake the cookies. But, at least Aunt Bee is a forceful character, a kind of traditional matriarch. In fact, she is reminiscent of only a handful, but at least a handful, of earlier sit coms, I **Remember Mama**, and now I am going really far back, you will have to bear with me, **Molly Goldberg**, and so on, where households really did rotate around the Matriarch.

And while I am reminiscing I cannot help but mention John Forsythe of **Bachelor Father** who was not even married because he did not need a woman, he was so rich he could buy as many substitutes for domestic and mothering work that he wanted. In short, motherwork can always be purchased as reflected in the large number of motherless households on television--then and now.

More recently there are even less credible, totally ridiculous reconstituted families in which women are entirely absent. **Full House**, in which three adult males raise three adolescents, and **My Two Dads**, the stupidest of all in which a dying woman leaves her daughter in the custody of two men because she does not know who is the biological father.

But the real absurdity of all these shows, single, double or triple households, with or without help, is that it runs contrary to the social statistics. In America, where these shows originate, of the 10 million single parent families only 2.4 are actually head by men. But if we look at television we find quite the reverse kind of set up. In fact, I can only

think of a couple of shows, and you can correct me if I am wrong, which are really single head female families, **Kate and Allie** and **One Day At A Time**. And what it suggests is that maybe these sorts of families are too close to home for us to want to see them very much. Although, **Kate and Allie** and **One Day At A Time** has done very well.

The relationship between what we want to see and its relevance to reality is especially relevant to one of the more recent positive and realistic shows of the '87-'88 season, **30 Something**. Now, I know a lot of people raise all sorts of criticisms against it as middle class, Yuppie and self-indulgent, starring a host of beautiful people, but I think there is something beneath the bourgeois exterior and that is there is something real here. At least it is a depiction of motherhood and domestic life that rings true for however limited a social milieu it may portray. Now, strictly speaking it is not a sit com. There is no canned laughter. I call it "T.V. verite", TV Guide calls it "Dramedy". That is the new buzz word. In fact the show is so real that it is close to boring, which is why people feel very strongly about it one way or the other.

But it does depict a real household with a new baby who cries, spits up food on people, keeps people up at night, unwittingly interferes in the love life of the main protagonists, Hope and Michael. It focuses on a real mother who is overwhelmed with motherhood and her loss of a working adult lifestyle. It depicts an imperfect husband who is trying his best, friends who are divorcing, and other women who find it difficult to get together with men at all.

My husband says that the show is a soap. He really thinks it is quite horrible, but I do not think he has ever seen a real soap. Most men have not. In real soaps the generations are five years apart, the babies are only there as the result of happenstance liaisons, they are never the focus of the show. No one takes care of kids or households because they are so busy -- and they do not work for a living.

30 Something has been relatively successful and could be the prototype of a new kind of show because at least it does focus on some of the realities of the world, including motherhood.

Finally, there are a few shows which depict two parent intact families which are anomalous in another respect, and I really want to emphasize these in particular. The two I refer to are **The Cosby Show** and **Family Ties** because they have been so extraordinarily successful. Maybe many of you watch them yourselves. They seem to be egalitarian, liberal, new, but really it is the same old thing.

In **The Cosby Family** it is dual career, doctor, lawyer, a meticulous house that is run invisibly. Neither the children nor the parents do any housework. The father hangs around the house a lot, however. And of the two parents Cosby is the one who is most involved with the kids and is the pivotal centre of family life. It is called **The Cosby Show**. He is soft, absent minded, motherly, complete with a maternal paunch. His wife is pragmatic and decisive and level headed.

Similarly Steve, of **Family Ties**, being the good ex-hippie liberal that he is, also seems to perform most of the mothering and housework functions, more than his wife Ilise. His demeanour and presentation of self is also more waffly, soft, indecisive and he is more involved with the kids. In short, his are the ties that bind. Even before Ilise goes back to work, but especially after, it is he who comes home from the office and immediately indulges in the domestic tasks while she sits at the table and finishes her office work.

We should not be tricked into thinking that such shows are the result of some new liberated ideology. In reality it is the oldest TV cliché in the book. It is **Father Knows Best.** And although the father is no longer as authoritarian as in the old days when I grew up, he nonetheless still wears the pants. The catch is that now he wears the apron too.

It is a funny thing really that there is lots of talk in our culture about women running the family, henpecking their husbands, being obsessed with their houses, over protective, meddling, but this is not reflected on TV in the reconstituted family. In **Eight is Enough**, for example, the father mothers all of them, including his much younger second wife.

There are only a couple of traditional shows in recent years, domestic sit coms or even dramadies, that really fit the mythical stereotype where the woman is in charge, and one is **Family**, starring Sada Thompson, directed by Mike Nichols, which is a very avant garde and sophisticated series. And then there is the odd glimpse in non-sit coms of motherhood, such as Mary Beth in **Cagney and Lacey**. But these glimpses are far and few between.

O.K., let's put it another way. I can find more shows over the 40-odd years of television which feature dogs and horses, **Flicka, Mr. Ed, The Littlest Hobo** to name a few, than I can find shows which feature Moms. Do you think they're trying to tell us something?

Considering the fact that since the beginning of television the situation comedy has been a mainstay of hourly viewing, and the domestic sit com in particular has been a primary crop in the staple diet, the omission, or at least the secondary status of moms is surprising indeed. Or is it?

It probably comes down to the cheap shot, the novelty, an easy laugh. After all, TV and sit coms in particular, were never meant to be informative, it is supposed to be entertaining. But I suspect there is more to it than this. As suggested earlier, dispensing with or at least down playing the mother role allows the father role to change and develop and clearly this is still the focus of most television.

And I think there is more. I do not want to be entirely cynical about the effect of feminism on sexist attitudes and in the media in particular. I think there has been an effect, but it has also been turned around. I think feminism has taken its toll. And one possible effect of the gender critique on the media has been for the industry to transcend or sidestep various issues.

For example, advertisers have been harassed for so long about dumb housewife ads that they are increasingly deleting women from the portrayal of products altogether, maybe doing genderless ads, which is a trend now in terms of marketing research.

Yet, again to parrot some of the comments Bernice made, I think it is possible to depict mothers, even housewives, in non-offensive ways. The latter requires thoughtfulness and creativity and these are not always easy to come by.

We are at a stage in the gender revolution that we do not have to be afraid to use the words mother, motherhood or even housewife, (although the latter is a bit of an offensive misnomer because it suggests women marry houses). We certainly should not be afraid of thoughtful or humorous portrayals of these roles. Many adult women, perhaps most, still involve themselves in these tasks, which is not to say that fathers do not or should not.

I can see no benefit from wiping motherhood images from the media, as we have sometimes been prone to do. Yes, they must be developed, changed, expanded, but obliteration is dishonest and destructive. Rather we should be encouraging creators in the media to portray motherhood in more varied and realistic ways. If our hearts are warmed by seeing Tom Selleck with a baby, why not a woman? If we are amused at Dustin Hoffman's incompetence, shy not a mother's? In this regard, Carrie Snodgrass's portrayal in the movie **Diary of a Mad Housewife** was a scathing, but really quite a stimulating critique of the issue. Why is there not more?

In short, for a culture that is into fathers, male housekeepers and bachelor baby carers, should we not have some space to look at mothers too? Let us bring back mom.

MANON VENNAT

Vice-President
SpencerStuart

I will be dealing with media and the representation of the working mother and I will be talking mostly about the print media and only a little bit about television.

Whenever we think of working women we think of daycare and that great myth, the superwoman. On daycare, listen to this particular scenario which I read recently:

> "It is 7 a.m. and a working woman begins her day serving breakfast, making lunch, finding lost shoes and driving her family to work and school. Her last stop is her company's daycare centre where she drops off her mother."

Familiar? Not at all. Shocking? Absolutely. But if you think about this a little bit it is not very farfetched. As you begin to scratch the surface on child care services a new tornado is twisting its way rapidly, elder care. Many persons in the labour force, which includes the majority of women, will not experience a lessening in the care giving aspects in the family life, but only a change in the age of the dependents. Because, if you think it is all over by the time your children reach high school, you had better think again.

Where do I start? I have been a wife, I am a mother, a homemaker, a career person and a volunteer. I am so busy living all of these roles that sometimes I wonder if I can see the forest for the trees. Like all of you, I am feeling some of the time role overload. I wonder if it is today's society asking too much or are we asking too much of ourselves?

The media projects the image of the successful working woman as a well dressed and stylish looking, as if you just walked out of the hairdresser and the manicurist. She is super organized with her brilliant husband who supports her initiative and drive so long as it does not affect his clean shirts and matching socks. She has children without problems and with straight teeth. Her teenagers do not have acne and are never bored. Of course she has a designer house with everything in its place and a place for everything. Let us not forget the family dog who never spots inside, who knows the difference between the neighbors lawn and the sidewalk where he drops his fertilizer where he has learned to pick it up himself. The household cats are never interested in the furniture. All this, of course, with a sizeable bank account because of a very good income.

The problem is we speak of an image but we neglect the reality. How beautiful but how false. The reality is a lot bleaker. I was just describing a very privileged exception or a minority, not the majority who are here or struggling with horrendous courage to make ends meet, to raise families alone, working with poor education and poorer chances of advancement.

The woman who works is in fact a walking computer, programmed

with multiple lists to keep her informed of the comings and goings of each family member, and the grocery list, the list of appointments with the dentist, the pediatrician, parent teacher meetings, et cetera. Not very powerful.

To this we add our up to date lists of responsible persons to assist her, if she can afford them, electricians, plumbers, babysitters, et cetera.

What about the man going to work? He leaves home with very little worry in fact. He has a spouse -- I am talking about the working spouse who makes sure the children wake up, are dressed, that the family eats its vitaminized breakfast. She makes sure the children take the school bus or public transportation, that the babysitter has arrived or the kids are transported to daycare.

Of course this is on a regular day when the children are not sick, the school is not on strike and the babysitter is not late. The husband is already at work. She has not left her kingdom. He arrives ready to go. He is seconded by a system which supports him. Further, he has more chance for advancement than she. He is often her boss. He has been better prepared to envisage a career.

I would very much like to set this myth of the super woman to rest and to reflect with you on some of the difficult issues relating to women at work in the coming years. I have worked all my adult wife. I am very happy about it, but sometimes...!

Who are the working women? I do not want to bore you again and again with statistics, but suffice it to say that about one out of seven full time working women earn less than $8,000 per year, and only 64 per cent of what men earn, that 75 per cent of workers earning minimum wages are women. The female force grew by almost 120 per cent between '66 and '82, but what kind of work do they do? Fifty per cent are in clerical, sales or service jobs. Not very high incomes. Only about 8, 9 per cent of women are in managerial or administrative positions and that is not close to the top.

How important is their work? Over 60 per cent of families in Canada would be living below the poverty line if women were not earning an income. About half of women with children under three and over half of women with children over three and under five are working. In 1983 there was one place in daycare for every seven children whose mothers work. That is not a very pretty picture, and it has not changed a great deal.

I could speak for hours about women who are in the work world. One thing is sure, we are here to stay. I believe that the option of women remaining at home for most of their lives is fast disappearing if it has not already gone. Women will remain and increase their participation in economy, not only to ensure their own economic wellbeing, because they have to understand they will spend some part of their lives alone whether as widows or as divorced people or even as singles, but also that of their family.

The problem is that women are assuming a greater economic responsibility while her male co-worker does not assume a correlating responsibility for the household. How about the Marlboro man washing clothes?

Mothers who go to the office leave their motherhood, their children and their marriages in the cloak room or in their lockers at the plant. As a matter of fact, I think generally speaking we can say that parenthood is not part of the office. Corporations, let alone society, do not recognize the needs of working couples. For example, flex work hours, childcare, et cetera.

Progress, however, has been achieved through women's pressures, mostly if not exclusively on governments. For example, the issue of child care which is now so fashionable in Ottawa and the provinces is really the result of women's political clout. We vote and they know it.

One of the major problems about child care is that it is looked at as a women's issue and not as a family problem, as most related problems to motherhood and to the work force.

One of our serious problems is we will have to solve the integration of our different roles in the family and at work. The wellbeing of the family is linked to the wellbeing and quality of the work life of the women who are working, the mothers who are working. As women become more and more numerous and achieve decision-making levels they will have a better opportunity to change the corporate culture and to bring this about. But let me tell you we have a long way to go.

I cannot understand why governments interested in child care, increasing births, maternity and paternity leaves do not have a Minister of State or a full department responsible for the family to provide the linkages among policies and program, but above all a sense of direction.

As you have all read Premier Bourassa announced recently a special incentive to increase the birth rate. He forgot to mention his assessment of the situation not that women do not want to have children, or that women are really not interested in motherhood, but the fact is that more women are having children but they are having fewer children. Therefore motherhood is still with us.

The problem with corporations and with women in the corporations and mothers in the corporations is that they do not have votes. Most women in the corporations are not in a position to effect a cultural change in the corporation. They are present at lower levels and very much less at any kind of decision-making levels while about 50 per cent of today's entry level managers in the U.S. -- and it is about the same in Canada -- are women. The figures diminish by half at middle management levels and to a tiny two to three per cent at more senior levels. The same thing in Canada.

There have been several articles written recently about women in management and the articles deal with women, mothers who

are leaving the corporations. It is a small trend but it is significant. Ten years ago one out of eight MBA students in the United States were women. Today one of three are women. One of the four of the best women MBAs of the class of '76 at Harvard quit the managerial work force.

Perhaps working mothers are going to work with unrealistic expectations with stories of successful women dancing in their heads. The cover stories look great. Is it because they cannot cope in a rigid environment which does not allow them to be themselves? These women are going, not necessarily back home, they are going to start their own small corporations and to be able to control their environment.

On the other hand corporation men have not yet learned to live corporately with women. For example corporations have not yet come to grips with women leaving to have children. If an employer loses a manager to another corporation it is bad luck. If a woman leaves for a few years to have children she is a bad investment.

The whole works is a family problem not a corporate women's problem. If employers are serious about equal treatment of women and men they will have to give her the same jobs as well as the same pay, but also the same kind of support, not to her as a mother but to her as a parent as part of two people who bring up children. And, as I continue to say, we have a long way to go.

I believe that the impact of women in the business world will have much to do with men rethinking their position, not only as men in the work force but as persons at home and sharing.

Do we as women join the men's world or do we change it? When will we be at the critical mass level to be able to change the corporate culture? The great majority of us work. We must work to earn a living to achieve security in our older years. Hopefully, some of us are also enjoying the challenge, the stimulation of growing and participating and advising. As you know we are few.

I think it was Ms. Augustine who mentioned the study of The Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Woman called **What Will Tomorrow Bring**. One of my concerns as a mother in the work force is the role model that I provide to my 17 year old daughter. In their recent study, as Mrs. Augustine reminded us, I thought it mind boggling to learn that the lack of awareness of potential barriers to accomplish their goals and opportunities available to them has led our teenagers to some very romanticized ideas about their future. Many hold notions of the future that did not tally with the likely outcomes of their lives.

In the eyes of these adolescents, there is no unemployment, no divorce and no poverty, only interesting jobs, adequate incomes, loving husbands, trouble free children, home ownership, international travel, et cetera.

My own daughter would like to have four children. She thinks she will be staying at home. She had a full time working

mother. I have always worked. I have always spent a great deal of time with her, hopefully quality time, but she has seen me harassed at times and with difficult periods when I'm trying to combine multiple careers, but she wants her Ph.D. and she will have a very successful career.

We need to search for more effective ways of sensitizing our young women to the realities of the future without dampening their spirits or lowering their aspirations. Certainly young women need a greater awareness of the present realities of women in the work-place, the potential impact of microtechnology on the their jobs, the difficulties of raising children as a single parent and the increasing need for two incomes in the family.

If we want to assist girls to break out of the stereotypes of the financially and emotionally dependant women we need to encourage them to create ambitious and realistic plans. These plans must not only take into consideration the present inequalities and lack of opportunities which exist for women, but also try to change the circumstances for the better. Generally greater equality of opportunity cannot be realized until girls are aware of the stereotype nature of their choices and the potential pitfalls which could result from them.

What kind of solutions can we envisage? Unfortunately they are not easy and they are not very innovative. Certainly in corporations where we are looking now at alternatives. There is a beginning. I am not saying yet it is a trend. There is a beginning, that rather than losing female mother, female power, female managers we are starting to look at alternatives such as part time work, flex time, maternity leaves and that will continue.

We also have to envisage a major change in attitudes. The greater presence of women will mean an increase in the presence of better facilities. A greater increase in the presence of men and women from the younger generation will bring about changes. I am already seeing that.

There is also the area of decision-making. We have 40 year old men to about 50 year old men who are now getting into the major decision powers who have daughters who are 17, 18 to 20 and who are discussing their problems and who are looking at jobs. And some of them are getting to their first jobs even and are having problems. These men as they get into their 50s will be looking to help women in their own companies, to help them with some of the burdens which only they can take on.

I have already seen in Montreal the President of a major corporation who set up a very important youth employment program and told me "Did I not have a daughter with a problem, a married daughter with a problem, I would not have considered such a program". The father's are being sensitized to the needs of their young married daughters.

Another thing that we have not mentioned today is the fact that somehow we do not seem to give importance to the child. When we talk about children we always talk about the problems

and the responsibilities and the sacrifices. No one ever talks about the joys of having children. Also we do not talk about the collective responsibilities for helping children, for bringing up children.

I think personally the biggest and the most powerful method of achieving equality in the work force for mothers is through politics. I still think that men control the social and policy agenda and that more women getting into politics, or mothers getting into politics will make a great deal of difference in terms of government policies.

The same applies for corporations, but I think that governments will play a greater role in this. There are some very good corporations, mostly the bigger ones who can afford to start child care programs and can afford to help women who are going on maternity leaves in terms of keeping jobs open. But let us not kid ourselves, women in management will have a great deal of difficulty because often they are doing work that is more unique than the majority of women who are in positions which are replaceable, whether you are an office manager or a word processing operator or even a management information systems analyst. Thus, I think that if we are going to solve the problem we are going to have to go into politics.

There are some very good examples of what is being done. Child care at the office is happening. It is now happening because corporations are finally realizing that they need their women staff. Women in management and professional jobs are making enough money to pay for full time help at home, mainly because they cannot use child care at the office, it is only nine to five. Sometimes we are, as I said, in unique positions which cannot be filled by others.

But let us not kid ourselves, the child rearing years are sheer joy, but they are terribly demanding on a working woman's physical and mental health, even if she has great support from her spouse. She may have the dollars, but not always. Most of us have been through it and looking back I am very pleased with my achievements as a mother and I hope the same for you as you look back.

Thank you.

HARRIET ROSENBERG

Department of Social Science
York University

Professor Harriet Rosenberg made a slide presentation and transcripts are unavailable. Below are sources that address similar issues that were presented.

Shostak, Marjorie. Nisa: The Life and Words of a !Kung Woman. Vintage (Random House), New York. 1983

A life history autobiography of an extraordinary woman with much contextual material about !Kung society.

Lee, Richard B. The Dobe !Kung. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, New York. 1984

A short well-written ethnography. See especially Chapter 6 "Marriage and Sexuality" and the appendix "Eating Christmas in the Kalahari" for an analysis of non-competitive behaviour among men.

Draper, Patricia. !Kung Women: Contrasts in Sexual Egalitarianism in Foraging and Sedentary Contexts in R.Reiter (ed) Toward An Anthropology of Women. Monthly Review Press, New York. 1976

A discussion of the high status of !Kung women and changes in that status as a result of changes in subsistence activities.

Also of interest are the extraordiary films by John Marshall on !Kung life. They may be rented or purchased from:

Documentary Educational Resources
Department TDK
5 Bridge Street
Watertown, Massachusetts
02172
Phone: (617) 926-0491

Especially useful would be Marshall's film "N!ai: The Story of a !Kung Woman" which documents the disintegration of living conditions for the San of Namibia under South African control.

THE VERY REVEREND DR. LOIS WILSON

Co-Director
Ecumenical Forum of Canada

There have been three nights in my life when I was kept awake by excitement. The first was when I had spent some months in India and when I hit Geneva I landed in a feather bed and I was kept awake by the enormity of the situation where half the world sleeps on the ground and the other half on feather beds and why if there is a God of justice that should continue.

The second night where I stayed awake all night was the night I was elected Moderator of the United Church of Canada and I was highly excited by the opportunity given me to articulate my faith in a public forum and to give leadership in that particular church.

The third time was the birth of my first child and I was so excited with being a mother that I stayed awake, despite all those pills they give you to put you to sleep. I could not sleep for about three nights, therefore my milk would not come and it was only after I got home that I threw away the bottles and got her onto the breast.

So I tell those stories because I am a mother of four children and to be a mother has been and continues to be an incredibly rich and profound experience, probably the most profound role that I have been called to play in the multiple roles in my life. I want to underline that because I am going to be very critical, I think, in what I say about the religious institutions support or non-support of motherhood.

I know that much of religious faith is passed from one generation to another through both mothers and fathers. Recently when I was in the U.S.S.R. I was again excited and surprised somewhat to see that the role of grandmothers in that culture is profoundly important. Many of the mothers have opted out in terms of religious faith but it is the grandmothers that are perpetuating the faith and communicating it to a second generation. And since I have become a grandmother I really applaud that role.

Following this panel discussion, I will return to a conference at Victoria University sponsored by the World Council of Churches on the topic of women and faith communities. It is an international conference including women from the Jewish community, the Islamic community, the Sikh, the Hindu, the Bahai, the Christian, Covenant of the Goddess, Native Spirituality and Buddhism. And we are 60 women who are looking at not only motherhood, but the images of women in those various religious traditions. And this morning was the subject of family and family law in those religious traditions.

We have been at it all week and I must tell you that there has been astonishing consensus from women drawn from those faith traditions all around the world on a number of matters. One is that the position of women in the faith communities is

shaped and controlled by a pyramidic system, a patriarchal system which most feel that the male is in control of the system and women are understood as subordinate, complimentary but definitely subordinate and secondary.

So that we have concentrated not on women's issues but on the system which perpetuates this distorted relationship between men and women. The Jewish woman last night was telling us that the role of women in Judaism is as helpmate. In Hinduism the laws of succession and the land are stacked against women. In Islam, man is the passport to heaven. In Christianity, although it claims to have equality, the way it comes out in institutions is that women are usually subordinate.

It is an ambiguous role!

I brought along something that I got in the mail. People keep sending me this I think to correct my opinions. This is headed **What God Expects of Husbands and Wives** from a fundamentalist Christian organization, all buttressed by proof, taking scripture out of context. And it is a cartoon that starts out with:

> "The husband is a provider. The wife is a homemaker. The husband is a leader. The wife adapts to her husband. The husband is a lover. The wife respects her husband. They are equal as people but have different roles to play."

Not my position!

There was also consensus in this interfaith women's conference that much of this patriarchal system which places the women in a subordinate role is legitimized by religion and legitimized by religious institutions. For example, the resurgence of Hinduism, which is so prevalent in India right now, is strengthening the dowry system and the dowry for the women is in proportion to how unproductive she is. So if she is felt to be utterly useless and unproductive economically, then the dowry is high to make up for her uselessness. But in parts of India where, for example, women are heavily engaged in producing millet and wheat crops there is no dowry system at all because she is economically valuable.

The third thing is that in all our religious communities it is felt that a high value was given to women as mother, that is the role of motherhood was exalted, perhaps exalted beyond what it deserves, and the woman was therefore given a high role but a very limited role, a privatized role, in fact.

In religious institutions the women have developed and supported special forms of organizational life especially suited to women, particularly mothers because they have been excluded from decision-making. As anybody who goes to church knows in this country most congregations are full of women but very few are in decision-making positions in the structures of the Christian churches. And one of the things that has happened is the feminization and the privatization of the church, and theology as a result.

I will speak out of the Christian tradition since I know it best, but I am learning from the conference that that is not unique to religious institutions. Some of the liturgies, for example, that are in Christian churches and certainly in the Protestant churches, is Mother's Day. It has been in the churches for some time and in my view it has rather sentimentalized the role of mother, has said mother has no higher role even though it is completely unpaid. My own son said three times he tried to phone me on mother's day and I was never there so he gave up.

The Anglicans in their liturgy still have mothering Sunday, they do not have fathering Sunday, a special thing to give the mothering role a certain prestige but which in turn privatizes it and feminizes it and removes it from the public arena. In both Orthodoxy and Catholicism the mother Mary is given that role.

In many wedding services still apparently the bride is given away, so passes from father to husband in one fell swoop and it is the brave bride who will speak at her own wedding. Usually the groom speaks for them both.

I have got to say that women have not found either religious authority or the Bible very supportive of their life experiences, and I have illustrated some of this that has been the practice of Christian churches. And so, because they have been excluded they have developed auxiliaries, ways of working around the institution and in that way have made rather significant contributions despite the system that is there. They have sought also, within the institution the right to speak, the right to hold office, the right to represent a congregation in structures, the right to lead people in special ministries, the right to be ordained, the right to have opportunity for ministry equivalent to that of men. So that has also been part of it.

So the first part of my presentation is to say that much of the institutional response to motherhood has been, in my view, negative because it has so over emphasized how glorious motherhood is. It has forgotten the other multiple roles of women and has in fact tended to really support the privatization of the mother in the home and not encouraged her to play those multiple roles and have some influence on public policy.

However, in the religious institutions, as in all others, there is a lot of rethinking going on and changing of structures and certainly a significant rethinking of the role of the mother, which I think is exciting. This is going on at several levels. One is at the theological level, certainly within the Christian community but also within the Islamic community, which I discovered yesterday as we had a feminist Islamic scholar from the Sudan give us a feminist interpretation of some of the Chorionic verses which seemed to subordinate the woman forever. And it was very interesting for me to compare that the Christian theological feminist reinterpretations of scriptures.

So what is being said now as women move into their role as mothers and as women move into the religious institutions in the theological area, is that motherhood is a legitimate role for women. Some women are choosing not to be mothers, and that is a perfectly legitimate role for a whole person who can experience fullness of life as well in self-chosen singleness. There are single parents who are not in that position by choice, single parent mothers.

Some of the theological work that is going on around motherhood is interesting to me. In the Catholic church, for example, there is some interesting work going on around "Mary the mother of Jesus" and "Mary the Virgin" and looking at that word "Virgin" which I suppose in western terminology has been understood as having to do with sexual intercourse or lack of and immaculate conception. But some feminist Catholic theologians are now saying that that term in its original Greek has more to do with the way we use the word. In "Virgin forest," it is untouched, pristine, unique, not derived, able to stand with their own identity and in that sense "Mary, the mother of Jesus" is the virgin, is the unique person, not deriving her identity from her motherhood particularly.

In all traditions within the Christian community there is much use now of those scripture passages having to do with the bent over woman who had been bent over for 18 years and was healed by Jesus, not only that women are unbending and standing up straight and claiming their own history but that that action was done on the Sabbath day in the Synagogue and therefore really raised critical questions to the whole religious ecclesiastical establishment.

The woman who had the issue of blood is another passage that is used by feminist theologians to raise the whole issue of the institutional churches attitude to women's bodily functions where in some Christian churches, for example, when a woman is menstruating she is barred from receiving the Sacrament. In Orthodox churches if you are a woman of menstrual age you are not allowed in the Sanctuaries, only after menopause that you are allowed. And so the whole issue of whether blood is life giving, as many of us believe, and a sign of rejoicing or whether it is shameful and dirty and should be kept apart, I think it very much at the feet of the religious communities and their interpretation of what that is all about.

I have said that there are some very interesting things going on in the religious communities, all of them in these days around the role of women, around the role of mothers and it is changing. I was prepared for ordination in 1950 but at that time I also wanted to get married and so my church said to me "Well, you cannot do both, obviously." And I said "Why is it so obvious? My husband is going to be married and he is also going to be ordained." "Well, but you are going to have children. Who will look after the children?" Those were in the bad old days when even my own church, the United Church, was hitting the headlines opposing daycare for women and it was thought that to ordain married women would promote juvenile delinquency, destroy the home and collapse motherhood.

So I am glad to say that that has now changed, partly due to the cultural context in which we live. I myself was not ordained until my 15th wedding anniversary and after I had had four children. So I waited around until the church decided it was a good idea.

I find the religious communities are in the forefront pressing for daycare. Many of them are establishing daycare centres in their churches on a voluntary basis. There are summer camps in support of single mothers who need a holiday. The churches are very much into the support of farm women who will stand up for the family farm; as mothers on the farm are obliged to go to work to save the family farm.

Even the issue of battered women. Many of the religious institutions are now beginning to take a different line there, thank goodness, and are no longer advising women to stay in an abusive relationship because after all "it's all your fault" and quote scripture to buttress that.

I was at the first meeting of the Canadian Association of Muslim Women here in Toronto and they were speaking about the same things and having workshops for battered women.

There is support on the part of the religious institutions for the emerging role of parents in joint parenting. For mothers as agents of their own life and not simply as observers or in set roles. There is much action, I think, around opposing the rigid sex roles that expect mothers to confine themselves to only one role in the home and there is some work around transforming the educational norms that make expectations of females very trivial and confined, as I say, to one particular role.

In the matter of ordination that is still a struggle within the churches! As I had mentioned, I would have been ordained 15 years earlier if I had gone for single blessedness, but I had announced that I was not going to do that. This situation is still very much a struggle within the Christian communities.

I would like to read you a tongue in cheek pamphlet produced by The Women in Britain, "The Movement for the Ordination of Women" and why they oppose men's ordination.

1) "Man's place is in the army."

2) "No really manly man wants to settle disputes otherwise than by fighting."

3) "Women would not respect men dressed in skirts."

4) "Because men are too emotional to be Priests. Their conduct at football matches, at political conventions shows this, while their innate tendency to appeal to force renders them unfit."

5) "Some men are so handsome they will distract women worshipers."

6) "If the Church is the Bride of Christ and Bishops are husbands to the Church all Priests should be female."

Around the world I find mothers from religious communities in a significant minority but moving in directions that I consider extremely significant. I think, for example, of the women from the churches of South Africa who are banded together in a movement called "Women Against Apartheid" and it is because they are mothers and because they see what is happening to their children and what they see happening to others children. I think of mothers in the Philippines who are banding together with some of the women who have been forced into prostitution for sex tours for the Japanese and German and western men who are so up tight they go over there for a week. And again, they are taking this as an issue for mothers as well as for single women who have decided to remain single.

In some of the theological colleges in Canada, 50 per cent of the students as candidates for ministry are now female, and I would think within 10 or 15 years we should be seeing some significant changes in the ritual, in the style, in the ways that religious institutions relate to mothers, to women as well as to men.

Let me conclude by just saying that I hope I have communicated to you that the role of religious institutions vis-à-vis motherhood is very ambiguous. In many ways it is supportive, it many ways it really privatizes the mother by giving it such a high status but in recent years has also become a little more realistic because some of us who are mothers are now in positions of leadership and are able to demethodologize some of the idealism and really try and turn the redemptive forces of the religious institutions to issues which are important for the human community.

Last night I asked a young mother who was at this conference what she thought I should say to you and she says "I would like you to say that I wish the religious institutions would support me in the issues that are so important to mothers like peace, like protection of the environment, like the misuse of technology, like the feminization of poverty." "That," she said, "is what I would hope that all the religious institutions could apply their energies to.

Thank you very much.

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR:

Q. Judy, you talked in your speech about many of the TV sit coms and how the father is idealized when he takes on a parenting role. I also want to address the flip side of that issue at the moment and something that I feel very strongly about.

I am a non-custodial mother and I have a support group of about 25 women who do not have custody of their children. And one of the things that they keep saying is that there is a great deal of social stigma around this role of non-custodian mother, and especially around women. Other women, even their own mothers say, "Why do you not have custody of your kids?" They don't examine some of the reasons of why we don't have custody. For example, their fathers have a higher income and can provide better for them, we (mothers) may need to return to school, et cetera.

And one of the reasons I think this occurs is because of the idealization of motherhood that shapes our society. And if I could just take a minute and read a few sentences from a book called **Absentee Mothers:**

> "It is the direct result of societies romanticized expectations in the realm of motherhood that absentee mothers are seen in such starkly drawn dimensions. One envisions fairy tale characters. Confrontation with human being is a terrible shock. A recent advertisement for a book of poetry, many similar examples could be readily found, effectively displays the fact that societies and therefore our own expectations of the mother go beyond even the extreme of human perfection."

I wanted to mention this to you because I think this is a very real problem in our society. Non-custodial mothers suffer social stigma and it is a direct reflection of how we view the role of mother. Judy, I wonder if you could respond to this?

A. **Judith Posner:** In **Kramer v. Kramer** non-custodial mothers is one of the issues that is dealt with. They brought this issue out in the open, but they had trouble escaping the notion that somehow Meryl Streep's character was a bad lady. That is, however, the overall feeling we come out with. I do not know if you can even blame it on the creators of the movie, as much as on our own in-built cultural stigma.

Q. Do any television shows truly depict mothers and the issues of motherhood?

A. **Judith Posner:** One thing I did not get a change to mention is where we do have some good coverage of motherhood issues and I am sorry to say it is **Phil Donahue** and **Opry Winfrey**. The only place where we see any real truth or reality, anything that tries to get

inside, beneath the surface, anything that really inquires as to what women really think about their lives are the talk shows.

Q. I would just like to contribute something in regards to what you were saying on education. I had been speaking for education wife assault a while ago and one of the things that we found is that the kids in the family life courses are asking for information on any kind of assault. The kids themselves are bringing these issues into the classroom and wanting to know what is going on in their own home and why.

A. **Jean Augustine:** I think you are quite right; young people themselves want the answers. Local school communities, local school communities, local school boards can take the ministry guidelines and make it appropriate for their specific area. But if a teacher goes by just the ministry outlines then they miss some of the issues that the boys and girls want addressed.

Q. I was moved, as we probably all were, by those slides. My question is, do you have any ideas about how we can use the insights, revealed in your presentation, in our own lives as mothers?

A. **Harriet Rosenberg:** We can learn from them, and the lessons have to do with creating a supportive infrastructure for mother work, for wife work, for daughter work. And those come from making demands on ourselves and on our state, that is being politically active. We cannot take our kids to work very easily but we can fight for good daycare, good high quality, non-profit daycare, so that we are not in this terribly isolated situation of being the sole care giver to a person whose demands are seemingly endless.

The lesson that I have learned is one of dispersion, of passing the care giving around, of drawing people into care giving roles.

In Huang society, there is the concept of entitlement. When you are born into Huang society you are entitled to care. You do not have to ask for it and you do not have to say things like: "Well, I do not want to be a burden on you, dear." They say "Give me that. I need that." And they would not ask for it unless they needed it. The concept is, if you need something you are entitled to it.

The best game that you can play with a kid is to hand the kid something and then pass it on to someone else so that the kid will know that you get something, but you also give something, that it is always coming around.

Instead of thinking of ourselves as meekly demanding social services, demanding support for our care giving responsibilities, let us bring it out of the closet. Care giving is absolutely not a privatized function, it is what reproducing human life is about. We need social support for it.

PANEL ON: THE ISSUE OF INFERTILITY

MODERATOR: CETA RAMKHALAWANSINGH
Council Member

PANELISTS:

Rona Achilies. Rona is Project Officer at the Health Promotion Directorate and is a Consultant for Women's College Hospital in their Infertility Support and Education Program. In 1986 Rona completed her Ph.D. thesis entitled **The Social Meanings of Biological Ties, A Study of Participants in Artificial Insemination by a Donor"**. Considered an expert on new reproductive technologies Rona is often called upon to participate in symposiums and conferences exploring this topic. She has written numerous publications and I am also pleased to say that Rona was the author of Council's most recent study which is re-entitled: **What's New About Reproductive Technologies?**. That study should be available shortly. Rona is also a member of the Canadian Coalition, which is the Coalition that is calling for the establishment of a Royal Commission on New Reproductive Technologies.

Jan Silverman. Jan is a Co-founder of a national network for infertile people entitled **I.F.F.: Infertility, Facts and Feelings**. Following her marriage Jan experienced two ectopic (tubal) pregnancies within a period of four months. Out of despair of being totally incapable for bearing children, came a recognized need to meet and speak with other women and couples struggling with an infertility crisis. In January, 1981 Deborah Reesor and Jan started I.F.F. In addition to providing peer counselling and group meetings I.F.F. has also sought to educate the general public about issues relating to and involving infertiles.

Linda Williams. Sociology Professor at Trent University. Linda has a Bachelor of Science degree in chemistry with some training in biology. Prior to completing her doctoral degree here at the Ontario Institute here at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education Linda was a sex educator for Planned Parenthood in Victoria, B.C. The topic of Linda's doctoral thesis was **The Parenthood Motivation of Couples Seeking In Vitro Fertilization.**

CETA RAMKHALAWANSINGH

Council Member
The Ontario Advisory Council on Women's Issues

This afternoon's session is on infertility. It is titled as such, but before we actually get into an introduction of the speakers I would like to make some reference to a couple of things that the Minister Responsible for Women's Issues said this morning.

He made reference to the issues around reproductive technologies. And he allowed in his remarks that this was one of the most important issues to face our society in the next few years.

What the Minister did not tell you is the advice that the Council gave him about this issue and what he should be doing about it, and because he did not tell you I will. One of the things that we said to him (in conjunction with the Canadian Coalition on Reproductive Technologies) is that since these issues are so important he should be supporting the call for the establishment of a Royal Commission on New Reproductive Technologies which would take into account these issues.

As the members of the panel speak on the issue of infertility and the various aspects of reproduction I think that you too will recognize how important this issue is and how important it is for us to bend our heads around how society thinks of women as being fertile or infertile, what we should be spending our time doing with respect to children.

And related to that are a number of important public policy matters, issues that may be addressed by a law or not, what doctors can and cannot do, what hospitals can and cannot do, what they should and should not be doing.

And with that I would like to now call upon our first speaker, Rona Achilles.

RONA ACHILLES

Project Officer, Health Promotion Directorate
Consultant, Women's College Hospital,
Infertility Support and Education Program

About a month ago I had a conversation with Linda Williams in which she said "I hear you are going to tell us about new reproductive technologies in 15 minutes." And I said "Yes" and we both laughed. And we laughed because, as people who have written and studied and thought about these technologies we know how difficult it is to summarize the complexity of the issues in a short period of time.

Nevertheless, that is what I am going to try to do today and therefore necessarily what I do is going to be abbreviated. I am going to give you the short story on the epic.

The first thing I would like to say is that I am very pleased to see that the Council has entitled this afternoon **The Issue of Infertility** because fundamental understanding reproductive technology are the issues surrounding infertility. Infertility has been with us for a long time. One of the reasons that it has a much more visible profile and is much higher in our awareness these days is because of the existence of the new reproductive technologies. It has taken hi-tech solutions (which are largely unsuccessful) to shed some attention on the problem of infertility.

So what are the new reproductive technologies? The term new reproductive technologies refers to a whole host of medical developments which have a variety of uses and implications. These include **in vitro fertilization** or IVF, which now comes in various versions, new prenatal diagnostic techniques like amniocentesis and chorionic villi sampling, gene manipulation, sex selection, fetal surgery, and we also tend to include procedures such as donor insemination and what is popularly referred to as surrogate motherhood as among the new reproductive technologies. The latter two, donor insemination and surrogate motherhood are not really technologies, nor are they really strictly speaking very new -- but I will say more about that later.

Among all of these developments I will limit myself to speak solely about those technologies involved in the creation of new life, those referred to as artificial reproduction technologies or the popular terminology would be "test tube babies." Those of you interested in prenatal diagnostic techniques and some of the other developments that I am not going to be speaking about can perhaps raise these issues during the discussion period. All of these technologies will have a pervasive impact on pregnancy and mothering today.
So I am going to do two things. I am going to try and describe what the procedures actually involve technically; and secondly, outline briefly what some of the social implications of these technologies are.

As an indication of how rapidly developments are moving in this field, whatever I say, write or read or any of us say,

write, or read in this area is history by the time it is in print or by the time we say it. Development are moving extremely quickly in this field.

One of the questions we need to ask about the development of these technologies is whether they mean an expansion of women's reproductive choice or whether they mean a loss of reproductive choice. Actually, I think they involve both in different concentrations.

Definitely these technologies do provide the opportunity for some women to have children who could, perhaps, not otherwise do so. On the other hand the development of these technology closes down some options and choices and introduces new pressures and problems for women.

For example, a woman 10 years ago who was unable to conceive had the opportunity to have a sense of termination, a sense of having dealt with to some extent her infertility. Now, and increasingly in the future I suspect, women with infertility problems will feel pressure to pursue every possible means available to become pregnant. One of the things that the technologies do with the crisis of infertility is they maintain hope. And this becomes particularly problematic with technology such as in vitro fertilization where there is a very low success rate.

I know Jan is going to talk more thoroughly about infertility but I will just say briefly that infertility affects up to 15 per cent of couples. Statistics vary, but about one-third of that tends to be on the part of the male; one-third on the part of the female and one-third is shared by both partners.

Currently most clinics are only using these technologies to circumvent infertility. It is possible, however, to use these technologies for other reasons, for example, for inconvenience. This depends, of course, on how we define infertility.

Was Elizabeth Stern infertile? Elizabeth Stern was the wife of William Stern the couple in the United States who hired Mary Beth Whitehead to bear a child for them. Elizabeth Stern had a mild case of multiple sclerosis. Are we going to define her situation as a type of infertility? Which diseases or conditions will we include as a reason to utilize assisted reproduction services? Who will make these decisions? These are some of the questions that these procedures raise.

There are several social factors which indicate that the demand for these procedures will increase, the rise of infertility being one. The use of sterilization procedures and then the reversal of a decision about wanting more children is another. Late child bearing, which sometimes incurs fertility problems, the decline of children available for adoption, and the desire of individuals in our culture for a genetic tie to their child are others. The possibilities for adoption have also altered in the last decade. Young white infants are less available than older children with additional special needs.

The easiest way to begin the explanation of what is going on with these technologies is by dividing them into two categories: artificial insemination and in vitro fertilization. I want to emphasize that this is a technical division. The fundamental difference between artificial insemination and in vitro fertilization is that with artificial insemination, conception and gestation occur within a woman's body. With in vitro fertilization conception goes on outside the woman's body <u>in vitro</u>, which is Latin for "in glass".

Artificial insemination is used for fertile women who have male partners that have infertility problems or for fertile women who do not have male partners. The procedure is defined according to the relationship of the man who donates the sperm to the recipient. So if it is the woman's partner that donates the sperm it is referred to as artificial insemination by husband; if it is a man who is not her partner and not going to be involved in rearing the child it is called donor insemination (DI).

This is not a new procedure and it is not really a technology. It is a very simple procedure. It is as simple as acquiring sperm through masturbation, taking that sperm at the time of ovulation and inserting it into the woman's reproductive tract. If the woman is fertile success rates are quite high. We do refer to donor insemination as part of the new reproductive technologies but I want to emphasize how simple the procedure is technically especially in light of the numerous <u>social</u> implications stemming from it.

In clinical settings donor insemination can be accompanied by a number of medical procedures and can be much more complex, but in fact it is a procedure that women can undertake without the assistance of physicians -- self-insemination.

The second technology that I am going to talk about is surrogate motherhood. The first issue with surrogate motherhood is that of language. We have been grappling in the feminist community for a new language to describe the arrangement of surrogate motherhood and I think the best one we have come up with is contract mother. The reason that we reject the term surrogate mother is because if you look surrogate up in the dictionary it means substitute. A woman who conceives, bears and births a child is not a substitute. She is the biological mother of the child. That is, in fact, what surrogate mothers do, or contract mothers, (I will slip into surrogacy just from force of habit) they conceive, bear and give birth to babies.

Contract motherhood is a much more socially visible procedure and has raised a lot more attention from the media than donor insemination. The baby M case in the United States is the best example -- it dominated the press for some time. Contract motherhood is generally used with couples when the woman is infertile and the male is fertile. The male partner's sperm is used to inseminate a woman, the contract mother, who agrees to surrender the child at birth.

Contract motherhood is about 14 years old (as an organized practice,) and women are paid usually around $10,000 for bearing a healthy child. There is, as far as I know, no organized services in Canada, however, there are already approximately 24 organizations in the United States offering contract mother services.

Although we may be appalled at the idea of women bearing children for a fee it is, of course, the lawyers who are really making a profit on these arrangements. Lawyers receive about $10,000.00.00 for arranging the contract -- the same amount a contract mother will receive.

In contrast to donor insemination the recipients or purchasing parents generally pick the biological mother of their child out of a catalogue. Additionally, in contrast to sperm donors, who are apparently difficult to find, there is an abundance of women who want to become contract mothers.

There has been a mixed response from the feminist community about contract motherhood, but in either case it has been strongly stated. On the one hand it is argued that this practice is exploitation, similar to prostitution or concubinage, and on the other hand feminists have said "Why not? It is about time women got paid for their reproductive labour."

I think we have to understand contract motherhood in the context of most paid work for women still being low paid, menial and with little opportunity for advancement, plus it has all the magic of pregnancy without the responsibility of having to rear the child.

The contract mothers describe themselves as vehicles or vessels in their attempt to separate themselves from the fetus they are carrying. There generally is a grief reaction when the child is surrendered and there are already self-help groups for contract mothers to provide support after the child is born and relinquished.

Contract motherhood raises a number of issues including the possibility that we could create a class of women who could become breeders for other women, men, or couples. These women could be divested of control over their bodies during the arrangement and held to a contract which enforces "baby selling." Also there are issues within the contract mother's family and within the recipient mother's family concerning siblings, grandparents and other extended family relatives and their attachment to the child.

The second major category of artificial reproduction is in vitro fertilization or what we refer to as IVF. In this process control over the process of conception moves firmly into the hands of physicians. This is what is popularly called in the media "test tube babies," which is not an accurate label. Real test tube babies would be ones that are conceived and matured in an artificial womb. The technology for this in humans has not been developed yet, as far as we know.

IVF is distinct from donor insemination in that it always involves a lot of very sophisticated technology and medical expertise. The process for recipients is long, drawn out, expensive, painful, physiologically and emotionally very stressful. What we do not read in the newspapers reporting with awe the birth of another IVF baby is that the success rate is very low, approximately 7 to 15 per cent. If we see this as a failure rate, in the most generous case, it is close to 85 per cent -- an 85 per cent failure rate -- and that may be after several attempts!

Its history is short with the first successful IVF child (Louise Brown) born in Britain in 1978. However, it is definitely a growth industry in the medical profession as there are already 11 (at least 11 at the last count) IVF clinics in Canada, all of which have very long waiting lists.

IVF is generally used when there is an infertility problem on the part of the woman and usually when there is a problem with her fallopian tubes. The procedure is not a simple one and I will just go through it very briefly. It is not a simple procedure but I am going to try and simplify it for our purposes here today.

The first step is retrieval of, or harvesting of, the eggs. This which involves taking hormones to stimulate egg production, daily blood tests, pelvic exams and ultrasound to find the eggs. Then there is the removal of the eggs. Usually between two and six eggs are removed surgically. This can involve either a local or a general anesthetic.

The second step is when the eggs and sperm (usually the woman's partner's, but not necessarily) are joined in a culture dish and hopefully fertilize.

The third step is when the fertilized eggs are transferred to the woman's uterus with the hope that some will implant and pregnancy will ensue.

If the fertilized eggs are transferred back to the same woman from whom the eggs were removed this is called embryo replacement. If they are implanted in another woman the procedure is called embryo transfer.

There are also several variations which I will not go into in detail today. There is a procedure GIFT -- gamete intra-fallopian transfer, there is a flushing technique, and there is also the possibility of a woman carrying a child she is not genetically related to. This is IVF using another woman's egg.

Just to point to some of the social issues raised by these technologies I will just have time to raise some of the implications in terms of family structure. Through a combination of these technologies we have the possibility of producing a child with five parents. There are potentially two fathers -- a biological father who is the sperm donor and the father who raises the child. It is possible to have a woman who is the egg mother only, a woman who may carry the child, and a woman who is distinct from the other two who may

rear the child. For motherhood, it means that a woman could be an egg mother, a gestational mother or a woman that rears a child who is not genetically related to her. If you introduce the process of freezing into that complex family constellation it becomes even more complicated, since both the temporal and geographical context of parenting can be altered.

As well as family structure we have an increase of power for the medical profession through the regulation of access to the technologies. This means that the medical profession is deciding who will and will not become parents. We have commercialization, the buying and selling of human reproductive capacities, and we have eugenics, the practice of selective breeding to perfect the human race. This is based upon an assumption that we could actually decide and design what a good human being is and then engineer that through genes. This presumes that what we mean by a good human being can be biologically created and is not shaped and created through social relationships.

There are many other issues including the need for more research on infertility, issues of safety -- we do not know what the short or long term consequences of these procedures are -- and issues of informed consent.

But I want to leave you with a quotation that I will read from a book by Doris Lessing called **Prisons We Choose To Live Inside**. The name of the essay is **"When In The Future They Look Back on Us."**

> "I spend a good deal of time wondering how we will seem to the people who came after us. What we live through, in any age, is the effect on us of mass emotions and of social conditions from which it is almost impossible to detach ourselves. Often the mass emotions are those which seem the noblest, best and most beautiful. And yet, inside a year, five years, a decade, five decades, people will be asking 'How <u>could</u> they have believed that?' because events will have taken place that will have banished the said mass emotions to the dust bin of history. To coin a phrase (p.13)."

It is going to take us a long time to sort through the issues raised by these technologies, particularly for motherhood, and I am happy that we are beginning that project here today.

JAN SILVERMAN

Co-founder
I.F.F.: Infertility, Facts and Feelings

To begin I would like each one of you to take just one moment and reflect on why you wanted or want to have children. Just think about it for a moment. I am sure many things quickly ran through your minds, yet I am equally sure that you would have difficultly verbalizing an answer. For the next few minutes I am going to explore with you some of the things that drive the infertile to extremes in her quest to produce a biological child.

What is the magic of pregnancy? Why the often overwhelming desire for children? What drives the infertile to experiment with any new drug or medical technique, such that they escape the stigma of infertility?

Please bear in mind that I speak to you as a professional infertile. I am one of those who desperately wanted to bear and parent children, someone who had this opportunity medically destroyed and therefore I am someone who has had to spend her adult reproductive years knowing a biological child would never be possible.

Finding oneself incapable of producing children is a physical handicap with resulting psychological trauma. It can be understood, accepted and lived with in the same way that other handicaps are coped with.

Couples regard having children as a fulfillment of both their marriage and even their purpose on earth. Parenting rather than marriage seems to be the crucial role transition point that marks the entrance into adulthood in our society. Infertility shatters this.

Back to Rona's statistics. Of the approximately 15 per of the population classified as infertile, in 30 per cent of the cases it is a male factor, 30 per cent of the cases it is a female factor and in 30 per cent of the cases it is two or more reasons. For another five per cent there is no apparent reason.

In her book **Infertility: A Guide for the Childless Couple**, Barbara Eck Menning utilizes the Elizabeth Kubler-Ross model to describe the various stages the infertile experiences.

Infertility is a death. It is the death of a dream, the death to a specific function of your body, the death of genetic heritage. The couples pass through the surprise, denial, isolation, anger, guilt, depression, grief and resolution stages, often individually, sometimes as a couple, and always at their own pace.

Often they will linger too long at isolation and separate themselves from the fertile world. Fertiles only talk about children and diapers and formula. Infertiles no longer feel that they have anything in common with their former friends.

Certain situations and settings now have to be avoided, family get togethers during the holiday seasons. For me it was shopping malls, I could not go through shopping malls, there were too many children, too many young families. Certain isles in the supermarket or drug stores also had to be avoided, you know, the ones with diapers and formula and pacifiers.

The resulting anger often reflects this loss of control of ones fertility. The depression that follows is a legitimate state of sadness and despair leading into a very real grief, yet an unusual grief, for there is nothing tangible to grieve over. There are no known rituals, no graves, so the infertile grieves alone or, if she is fortunate, with her husband.

However, space must be provided to allow the infertile to grieve. The final stage, resolution, is one in which the feelings are addressed, experienced and dealt with. However, I maintain that they are never completely overcome. Complete resolution is not possible for many of the reasons that Rona spoke of.

The social context in which we have been raised supports many of these preconceived notions regarding why women want children. For women raised in the Judeo-Christian tradition the dominant message is "Be fruitful and multiply." Children are blessings from heaven, barrenness a punishment or a curse. Producing children, and especially male children, was the only way a woman could survive and gain any status. To be barren was the greatest shame, the greatest curse. Barren women risked all the symbolic equivalences of death, isolation, loss of love, rejection from family, social humiliation and infertile could be reproached, ridiculed, burned as a witch, replaced and divorced. And, of course, no one was going to remarry somebody who could not produce an heir for them.

Even though the messages of the Judeo-Christian cultures often seem to have faded into the background infertility is often interpreted by the couple as a negative sign from a higher power about themselves as individuals or about their marriage, such as "I guess I was never really meant to be a mother in the first place." Or "Maybe it is because of something I did before I was married or someone that I did something with before I was married that is now rendering me infertile."

In addition, two traditional fertility norms continue to be widely accepted in North America. One is that all married couples should reproduce and; two, that all married couples should want to reproduce. Approximately 95 per cent of newly married couples want and expect to have biological children of their own at some point in their life.

Contemporary endorsement of these fertility norms of having and wanting children transcend sex, age, race, religion, ethnic and social class divisions. Years after studies show that humans do not possess anything instinctive that makes them want children we still hear about maternal instinct. What has been called instinct is intrically learned roles and expectations from society.

Childlessness, whether voluntary or involuntary, is considered to be a form of deviant behaviour in marriage and violates the prevailing norms of acceptable conduct. Childlessness becomes a stigmatizing status. Failure to reproduce, for whatever the reason, makes a couple suspect, targets of pressure from well meaning friends and family and objects of pity.

Biological parenting is one way to conform to these societal pressures. It is my opinion, however, that greater than these societal pressures are the pressures women place on themselves surrounding their infertility experience. The ramifications of the infertility experience are complicated and far reaching. Three major concepts are affected by the crisis of infertility, sexuality, self-image and self-esteem.

Infertility is inherently sexual. It deals with the reproductive and sexual organs. Sexuality is how a person thinks and feels about being the sex they are. Finding oneself infertile causes one to seriously question their sexual identity. Women feel a failure, incomplete in some way and, despite the statistics, are usually the ones blamed and who feel the blame for the couples infertility. Their femininity or feelings of womanliness are questioned for it is conceiving that is often felt to be proof of femininity and sexual competency. I felt neutered. I felt asexual and subsequently sexually inadequate.

Couples that undergo infertility investigations often find sex is now on a schedule that is to be carefully times and executed with the sole intent of making a baby. The ménage-a-trois of the infertile has the doctor right in bed with you with the husband and wife as their sex life becomes public and open to suggestions and scrutiny. Sexual relations that were once pleasureful, romantic, spontaneous and orgasmic are reduced for a time that can often span the years to an uninspiring and perfunctory act.

The dreading of sex which often follows along with the association of sex with failure serves to reinforce a woman's sense of failure as a sexual being. Her self-image often seriously deteriorates. In one study one-third of women surveyed reported they felt bad about their bodies and saw themselves as less feminine, yet the woman is constantly being forced to work with her defective body as she monitors its various functions. What is her temperature? Is it up today? Is it down today? Is she ovulating? Is she bleeding? How is her cervical mucus?

Women's self-esteem is related to their feelings of their physical self. Fertility is part of a women's sense of her physical self-worth. As Barbara Eck Menning said "infertile woman" seemed mutually exclusive to her. "I could be infertile or a woman but not both" she said.

Infertility can leave a woman feeling out of control of her body and powerless. In her study of infertile women Dr. Nina Josefowitz found many to describe infertility as the first major event in their lives over which they experienced having no control and to which there was no solution. For some of the women the sense of lack of control spread to other parts

of their lives and decreased their general sense of self and self-esteem. The greater the commitment to biological parenthood the greater will be the identity shock brought about by infertility and the more negative the effect on their self-esteem.

In addition it is noteworthy that infertile women have been classified by psychiatric studies as manifesting high degrees of anxiety, high neuroticism and emotional disturbance.

Through the women's movement, women have realized that emancipation has depended on breaking out of these restrictions imposed by nature, so we ardently seek to define ourselves as more than just breeders.

The women's movement has made a vehement condemnation of conventional domestic bliss as a woman's only life goal. However, I suggest that when all is said and done women still overwhelmingly want to bear children. However, the desire for a child is not the same as a desire to reproduce.

Up to this point I have been discussing the drive to have children as a means of avoiding the negative correlates associated with involuntary childlessness, better known as infertility. In addition, other motives for parenthood have been discussed, including parenthood as a way to conform to societal pressures, as a right of passage to adulthood such that your own parents will now see you as their equal and mature, and as role fulfillment, despite the women's movement. Of course there is a rarely discussed motivational aspect of desiring children because you like them and you would really like to have a family.

Some of the motivations for wanting a pregnancy have been discussed. Others, however, include:

- a desire to experience the bodily changes of pregnancy. I am told that pregnancy is a unique experience in which the female body is occupied, taken over and transformed both physiologically and psychologically. This is also tied in with the desire to breast feed, which has enjoyed a resurgence as the valued and healthful practice. It is a way for a woman to experience the total performance her body might be capable of giving.

- desire for genetic continuity, an heir to maintain the family name, as well as a reflection of oneself. I would have liked a little Jan, a little Richard running around the house.

- a special form of creativity -- bearing a child is one forum open only to women.

- expression of women's freedom. It has only been for the past two decades that widespread use of effective birth control has allowed pregnancy to be associated with free desire. Women could now plan when the desire for children should be fulfilled. The desire for children could become a personal

matter without the restrictions imposed by a dependency on nature and religion.

If the drive to have children is based on the motivations for wanting a pregnancy, and avoiding some of the consequences of being classified as infertile, then the couple will pursue the reproductive technologies and medical treatment Rona spoke about. If the drive to have children is based on a motivation to parent a child, the couple may be freed to pursue non-medical channels such as adoption, which is eventually what my husband and I did do and we are the parents of two adopted children.

In conclusion, the drive to have children is a multi-faceted complicated issue, further complicated by the stigmatizing effects of infertility. As the couple struggles to come to terms or resolve their infertility I suggest it is imperative that they explore within themselves their own reasons for wanting a child and/or wanting a pregnancy.

I recognize the fertile world does not have to stop and think about these things, although I suggest it would be beneficial if all couples did have to stop and think about why do they really want children. But we are not fertile, are infertile. Working through some of these issues may help the couple focus and regain a sense of control over their minds and their bodies.

Thank you.

LINDA WILLIAMS

Associate Professor, Sociology
Trent University

Actually quite a bit of my talk dovetails quite nicely with what Jan has said today, which is handy because I did not know exactly what the content of her talk was going to be.

I am also going to overlap just a tiny bit with some of the description that Rona gave of what IVF is actually all about and some of its success rates.

This paper that I am going to be delivering today does come out of my Ph.D. research and the purpose of my presentation today is to discuss the strong need that some women have to bear a child within the social context of in vitro fertilization. I would like to look at the desire or the need to have children that some women feel and connect it up with the demand for this new technology.

I am going to give another brief description of IVF because it has been my experience that when I speak to people about IVF most people do not really understand what going through an attempted IVF actually consist of. And I think it is very important that people understand this, because there is this kind of "Oh, gee whiz, isn't this marvelous" kind of aura around IVF, because all we ever see in the media generally speaking are people who are successes. A lot of people have a very unrealistic notion about what this technology actually entails.

IVF was originally developed to enable women whose fallopian tubes are blocked or dysfunctional to bear children. IVF works by bypassing a woman's defective fallopian tubes. Her ovaries are hyperstimulated with strong fertility drugs to produce multiple eggs, sometimes as much as 20, which are surgically removed. Her partner then produces a sperm sample by masturbation, or donor sperm can be used, and the eggs and sperm are combined in a glass dish. If fertilization occurs the resulting human embryos are returned to the woman's uterus through the cervix.

She then must wait for approximately two weeks to see if these embryos have implanted and a pregnancy has begun. If she is not pregnant her menstrual period will begin at this time.

Studies really vary on how successful -- or perhaps I should say on how unsuccessful IVF is. Rona today gave us the figures of 7 to 15 per cent. The figures that I am using here in the paper I have down 5 to 10 per cent based on results at the very best clinics in the world. In some clinics women who go to those clinics have not had any babies yet through IVF. So some clinics have a zero success rate. We have one in Toronto that has a zero success rate.

Nevertheless, whether you quote 5 to 10 per cent as a success rate or whether you quote 7 to 15 per cent the fact of the matter is IVF is a technology that fails the vast majority of

the time. So most of the women who go through IVF, even those who go through multiple times, never end up having a child.

And entire IVF procedure lasts just over three weeks from beginning to end. It is extremely stressful since the women never know from day to day whether they will have to the leave the program if their body does not properly respond to the fertility drugs. You can end up going through a few days of drugs and stopping; you can end up getting into the hospital and having to stop; you can end up having eggs taken from your body, none of which fertilize or you can have eggs fertilize but they do not go on to develop; you can have embryos put back in your body but none of them actually implant in the uterus. So it can fail at a number of steps along the way and getting through from beginning to end is extremely stressful.

The fertility drugs used in IVF can also produce a range of side effects. The list of side effects that I am going to give you do not come from medical literature, although they are also listed there, they come from the reported side effects of the women in my study. Extreme mood swings from euphoria to profound depression, hyperactivity, drowsiness, nausea, weight gain, dizziness, hot and cold flashes, as well as the possibility of hyperstimulation of the ovaries because of the drugs. Multiple ultrasounds and blood tests are also required as well as several days of hospitalization.

IVF is also very expensive. Fees of $3,000 to $6,000 and more per attempt in the United States are common. In Canada most provincial health insurance plans cover only a tiny portion of the costs involved. OHIP is one of the very few jurisdictions in the world that will cover most of the costs of IVF for a limited number of patients in Ontario hospital clinics, not private clinics. But most couples end up even in hospital clinics paying at least $1,200 per attempt out of their own pockets for incidental fees and for drugs. Most couples will go through IVF several times.

The question that fascinated and concerned me when I read early reports of IVF was "Why?" Why do some women want children so badly that they are willing to go through this very stressful, expensive and even for some women dangerous procedure? Women who undergo IVF sometimes describe themselves, and are described by others, as desperate to have children at any cost. Their strong desire to become mothers is seen as "natural" and is largely taken for granted by the general public and the doctors and scientists who develop and promote IVF.

What is almost entirely missing from the public debate on IVF is any sort of analysis of how a desire for children might be socially constructed, at least in part. (And Jan has referred to some of this in her talk.) In other words, to what extent do we as a society create a market for IVF by placing so many important meanings on fertility that to be infertile is indeed an unbearable problem.

In 1986 I completed an exploratory study which examined the parenthood motivation of couples seeking IVF and the extent to which it was socially constructive. I interviewed 22 women

and their husbands who had applied for or undergone IVF. Sixteen of these women were childless; three had an adopted child and three had a biological child or children. Today I am going to be talking about the parenthood motivation of the childless women.

Parenthood has a host of social and cultural meanings which vary both cross-culturally and also historically. Jean Veevers is a sociologist who has talked about the social meanings of parenthood and she believes that the social meanings of parenthood, and also non-parenthood, revolve around six central themes, and she defines them as follows:

1) Morality - this theme states that the desire for parenthood is a religious obligation; -- Jan spoke about that a little bit -- being a parent is being moral.

2) Responsibility - Desire for parenthood is a civic obligation; being a parent is being responsible.

3) Naturalness - Desire for parenthood is instinctive; being a parent is natural.

4) Sexual identity and sexual competence - Desire for parenthood is acceptance of gender role; being a mother is proof of femininity and of sexual competence as a woman; being a father is proof of masculinity and of sexual competence as a man.

5) Marriage - Desire for parenthood is the meaning of marriage; being a parent improves marital adjustment and prevents divorce.

6) Normalcy and what Veevers calls Mental Health -- Desire for parenthood is a sign of normal mental health; being a parent contributes to social maturity and personality stability.

So these are the six themes around the social meaning of parenthood that Veevers uncovered in her work.

When I asked the people in my study why they wanted to have children, and I asked several questions around this theme, two type of parenthood motivation emerged in the childless women in the sample. And the first type of motivation I have called "Personal Reasons" and I use that phrase to describe those motivations that seemed to come from within the women and were influenced by their own lived experience. These motivations did not appear to be socially influenced to a large extent and they were of two types. First of all there were the pleasures of parenthood and the advantages of parenthood.

The pleasures of parenthood included such things as a strong liking for children; a desire to watch a child grow and to contribute to its development; a desire to give love and nurturance to a child and a wish to recreate oneself in the present or to leave something of oneself behind in the future.

Some of the advantages of parenthood that they mentioned were the belief that a child would make life more meaningful and would keep you young. Children were also seen as a potential source of emotional support in one's old age. And other personal factors were a strong bond with one's spouse, wanting very much to have their partner's child; a previous abortion; and the effect of undiagnosed infertility also affected the parenthood motivation of some of the childless women.

The second type of motivation was in fact influenced by the social meanings of parenthood as described by Veevers six themes which I have just mentioned. Three of these six themes were mentioned and 12 of the 16 childless women in my sample stated at least one of these.

The first social theme that came up was marriage. Four of the 16 childless women believed that having children is an integral expected part of marriage and that marriage without children was literally inconceivable. Even more important to these women was the desire to become a family and becoming a family was clearly equated with having children. One woman said:

> "I think of us as a couple. It is strange that I am making that differentiation. I do not know. No, I think of us as a couple. When I say family I take in the whole nuclear family, you know, my mother, my father, my sister and my grandmother, but just the two of us I think of as a couple."

The notion that a married couple without children does not constitute a family is perhaps one of the most deeply ingrained of all our cultural ideas concerning families and it played an important role in the reproductive thinking, not just of the childless people in the study but also the people who had adopted children and the people who in fact already had biological children. We do not tend to think of a married couple without children, as a family.

The second theme that came up was the notion of sexual identity. In most of the childless women in this study did not see having a child as an important part of their femininity.

Five of the women, however, did see a definite connection between reproduction and femininity, but this connection for them was very complex and it was fraught with a lot of ambiguity and uncertainty. Frances said:

> "Yeah, [having a child] is important to me... I feel something's missing. Like I haven't, you know, done what I'm supposed to do or something. You know, your conscious mind says you shouldn't feel that way but you do. I do."

And Connie, said:

> "[Having a child] fulfills a need that's inside of you from the time I think you're a little girl. You always hear 'Wait till you grow up and have children

> of your own.' And I think that goes into it. But also in some women, maybe not in others, and that's okay too, but in some women there's a certain need that they need to have that. And in some women it's stronger than in others. That's what I think anyway."

So these women recognize clearly that the inadequacy they felt for not being able to give birth was clearly irrational today in the 1980s, but nevertheless based on what they told me their feminine self-image was negatively affected by their infertility.

And when I probed into their backgrounds they indicated that they seemed to have grown up with the taken-for-granted idea that they would bear children. We never talk about infertility to our kids and we do not deal with it, to the best of my knowledge, in most family life education programs in the school. I was a sex educator. I never talked about it.

So the idea that having children would be something that seemed to have been ingrained in them very early in life and their childhood socialization led them to believe not only that motherhood would be expected, that it would be something they would do, it would happen for them, but it would also be a major source of happiness and fulfillment in their lives.

Now, sociologists have pointed out, that the idea that a woman's primary role in life is to become a mother is often so thoroughly ingrained in young girls that it becomes almost a non-conscious ideology and not bearing children or wanting to bear children therefore almost literally unthinkable.

The third social theme that emerged in motivations of some of these woman was naturalness, that is the notion that a desire for children was natural or instinctive, and four of them mentioned this. Three of these women used the Freudian concept of the maternal instinct to explain why they wanted to have a child. They said they wanted to have a child because they had strong maternal instincts.

One woman, however, did not see a desire for a child as a maternal instinct but rather as something very real and strong that exists in both sexes. And she said:

> "You know, some people say if you're biologically a woman you really want to have children, and I don't think it's more a woman or a man, I think there's something inside you."

The notion that a desire for children is natural and instinctive I think can also be seen as a non-conscious ideology. We tell people that having children, wanting to have children is natural and instinctive and the notion that this is a social idea is something that people are unaware of.

I also asked the women in my study, and the men also -- I asked both sexes the same questions -- but I asked the women about pressure to bear children and they had all experienced

pressure from parents, in-laws, friends and even strangers. And they mentioned that they had been pressured more than their husbands and their husbands also mentioned that their wives had been pressured more than they themselves had. To the point where some of these people were extremely angry and would even avoid certain relatives and friends.

Also I think the notion that a desire for children is natural and instinctive tends to help justify and legitimize the heroic measures such as IVF which women sometimes undertake to have the child they so urgently desire.

So to conclude, my study has shown, I believe, that the motivations that prompted some of these women to seek parenthood did not only come from within themselves but were also influenced by ideas such as the notion that parenthood is part of the female gender role, that parenting is an essential part of marriage and the idea that having children is natural and instinctive. So, to a certain extent in 12 of the 16 childless women a desire for parenthood did appear to be socially constructed.

This finding is significant within the context of in vitro fertilization since a lack of understanding of the role that social factors play in parenthood motivation reinforces the continued construction of infertility as a medical problem only, which in turn serves to legitimize the medical "solution" of IVF for some infertile women. This in turn helps to create a market for the technology which will inevitably lead to its further growth and development. And I think the further growth and development of IVF may have harmful social consequences for women.

For the first time in human history, because of IVF, doctors and scientists have access to human eggs which can now be combined with sperm outside women's bodies to form human embryos. These eggs and embryos are the essential raw materials in the development of such technologies as human genetic engineering, post-conception sex selection technologies and artificial wombs. All of these technologies are currently under development.

No matter how potentially useful or dangerous a new reproductive technology may be it cannot continue to exist without an eager market. And in the case of IVF this market is both internally and externally constructed.

Since IVF and the other technologies that it may spawn, has the potential to radically change the social relations of human reproduction, it is essential that we examine IVF within its entire social context and not simply as a medical phenomenon or an ethical problem as it is currently the case.

Thank you.

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR:

Q. One point that our speakers did not make that I think is an important point of clarification has to do with the definitions of success rate. Do you define success rate by being able to get eggs? Do you define it by being able to successfully reimplant the embryo and achieve a pregnancy? Do you define it by actually bringing home a baby?

A. **Rona Achilles:** Probably either Linda or I can address that question. The figures that I was using are what is called "take home baby rates."

Probably one of the reasons that Linda's and my figures differed was because even with the take home baby rate sometimes what you get is multiple births so you may not be talking about the success of all individuals. Fourteen 14 per cent might refer to the number of babies rather than the number of individuals that got those babies. There is a whole discussion of that in the new Council report.

C. **Linda Williams:** I am glad someone brought up this whole question of success rate. I should have specified that I was talking about the take home baby rate.

Success rates quoted in newspapers are talking mostly about the percentage of women who get pregnant at a certain stage in the procedure, but they usually do not mention exactly what success rate they are talking about. And if you read "The success rate is 30 per cent" and it is in an article which is next to a picture of a woman who has previously been infertile but who went through IVF and had a baby, naturally you are going to think that 30 per cent of the women who try this technology are going to end up in a similarly happy situation. And that is absolutely not the case.

As I said in my talk, you can drop out of IVF at a number of stages along the way. So if a hospital is saying, "Well, you know, we have a 30 per cent success rate" generally what they are talking about is the percentage of women who have embryos put back in their bodies who end up achieving a pregnancy. But what they do not tell you is that a large percentage of the women who started IVF never get to that stage. So they are dropping out at a number of stages up until then.

And even if you do become pregnant the miscarriage rate for IVF is equal to, and some people will say it is slightly greater than the natural pregnancy rate which can be anywhere from 20 to 35 per cent. So then even achieving a pregnancy does not mean that you are going to get a live birth.

So the number of women who actually go through a procedure and come out the other end with a real live baby is very small, certainly no greater than 15 per cent

and I would say even less than that. I think that is being very generous. I would not go even higher than 10 per cent, and that is at the very best clinics in the world. Most of the IVF babies that are born in the United States come from three major clinics. Most clinics have very, very few successes.

C. **Jan Silverman:** I just wanted to again stress how destructive those sorts of statistics are and how deceiving they are to the infertile. Because what we did not discuss was the idea that the infertile eventually has to make that decision as to when enough is enough and when to stop. However, each time I read in the newspaper about a success rate this little voice in me says "Maybe you should give this clinic a call. Maybe you should." And then I have to think about what the statistics really mean.

Q. I would like to know, Rona, what controls are in place now with regard to genetic engineering and the new technologies that are being worked up quietly behind the scenes?

A. **Rona Achilles:** I believe there is a new report from the Medical Research Council on ethical guidelines for embryo research and I have not seen it yet. The only thing that I know from that report is that there is one recommendation that embryos could be experimented on up until 17 days from fertilization. I think that is the longest period so far from any ethical report in the world.

Mary Margaret, do you know anything further?

C. **Mary Margaret:** I am probably not the best person to speak about this topic because I get very emotionally distressed and angry about it, but I have read the publication, the guidelines for experimentation on human subjects. My concern about those guidelines are that they are not constructed from the perspective of the person who will be experimented upon, they are constructed from the perspective of people who experiment. I wrote a paper for one of my courses at school and deconstructed some of that booklet.

So if you want to get a copy of that publication you just have to write to the Medical Research Council. It is free.

I think I really do not want to make a comment because I am going to perhaps skew somebody's perspective.

But now that I am up here what I would like to say to Linda Williams that I read your publication **What Will The New Reproductive Technologies Mean For Women** and I think it is a very good thought provoking publication.

I would like to know of the 22 women that you interviewed, were any of these women non-white?

A. **Linda Williams:** No. No, none of them were non-white.

C. **Mary Margaret:** I am very concerned about the racist agenda that I see behind these new reproductive technologies. And if you read extensively, which I am sure you have, you may have realized that a lot of these technologies are developing in western industrial countries. We do not hear about IVF clinics in India, we do not hear about IVF clinics in Africa and I think that it is about time that Canadians, Americans, Australians, British, French started talking about why it is that there is such a pervasive pro-natalist pressure being put upon women in industrialized countries and an anti-natalist pressure being put upon women, for example, in India and in China where female fetuses are being aborted.

I agree that we have to see this in a certain social context, but I think that context has to be global. I do not think we can just look at what is going on in Canadian IVF clinics; that is a start, but we have to look at this on a universal level. And the potential for eugenics here really needs to be talked about.

Q. **Jan Silverman:** I have a question that I would like to put to the audience and other panel members. A number of people have alluded to the notion of whether or not women are aware of what they are getting into and what sort of education takes place by the medical profession of these women. It has been a long time coming in terms of women actually feeling that they are medically in control of themselves. What medical education takes place? How often do the doctors inform the women about what is going to happen to them? What about the effect of the drugs, et cetera? Can anyone talk a little bit about the patients rights?

A. **Linda Williams:** I was asking a whole range of questions about why women want to use this technology which, of course, comes from the question of why do they want children. But one of the things that I did not go into in great detail was "What did they tell you about this before you started." However, in the course of each woman's story I would sometimes ask this because of certain things that she had told me. And bear in mind it is also a small sample.

Some women said that they had been given a fair amount of information. Other women said that they had not been given a fair amount of information. But generally speaking even the women who said "Well, you know, they told me it was going to be stressful and they told me it was going to be difficult" had no idea of exactly how stressful and how difficult it was going to be before they went through it.

One thing that I did ask people about, and I asked every person this, was "What is the success rate at the program that you are going through?" And this was extremely interesting because I would almost inevitably get the

same kind of answer. It would begin with a big sigh. "Well, actually it is hard to say." or "I have asked the doctor that and it is difficult to get the information. I think they do not really want to talk about that too much. They said basically, I think it is..." and then they would give me a number, generally at least 20 per cent.

One thing that I did encounter in terms of the information that women were given was that it was patently incorrect. There was one doctor who I believe is no longer associated with the particular IVF program who would tell women "Just keep going through IVF, eventually you will get pregnant." There is no medical evidence on which to base that statement but it has the effect of keeping the women coming back and coming back and coming back because their doctor has told them eventually they will get pregnant.

This was a small study so I cannot generalize, but I think there is a great deal of variance in terms of the amount of information that women get when they go through.

C. **Jan Silverman:** I have come into contact (through my group I.F.F.) with hundreds, perhaps thousands of infertile women and couples; and, in general, the response has been pretty pathetic in regard to what information the doctors will provide. You have to remember that many women take a lot of drugs in an effort to become pregnant, ovulatory drugs, drugs that control their ovulation cycles, among other things. Now, it is difficult to generalize, but I will; from the population that spoke with me, pitiful amounts of information was given as the effects of the drug, as to what side effects there were, et cetera.

We did not even begin to talk about the kinds of testing that goes on when a woman is diagnosed as having an infertility problem. Very little information was given as to the type of tests they were going to have and what the possible side effects were. One person in our group had a hysterosalpinogram, which is where they shoot dye through your fallopian tubes to see if they are open or not, and the doctor neglected to say that it was an extremely painful procedure and she fainted on the table. Not that she would not have fainted had he told her, but at least she would have been prepared, someone would have come with her, she drove herself.

The other thing that is important to note is that often the infertile is afraid to ask the questions. You are afraid to make the doctor angry at you, to irritate the doctor. He is playing a God-like role. He is going to decide, or so you feel, he is going to make the difference as to whether or not you have a child, so very often you do not ask the question, you wait for him to offer. And again the fear really prevails that if you say something or probe too far then he is not going to want you as a patient anymore and then you are never,

ever going to get pregnant.

C. **Rona Achilles:** Just picking up almost the same comment as Jan's and that is I think the hallmark to me of the experience of infertility as I have studied it is two things: isolation and vulnerability.

Working with Women's College Hospital to develop an infertility support and education program I think is quite ground breaking, because I do not think we have had these kinds of resources. I think what the question really raises is this issue of the need for support and education around the issues of infertility and around making informed decisions about infertility.

My own study was on participants in donor insemination programs and this was something that really, again like Linda, it was not something that I asked directly, but it was something that emerged during the interviews.

When I asked the women things like "Do you know if you could get information about the donor?" they said "I do not know." "Did you ask the doctor?" "No, I never asked him." "Do you know if there are records?" And several of the women were concerned about the fact that they might at some point want medical information, for example, on their donor. But they had never asked the doctor and even now were afraid to go back and request information. There was, as Jan said, a real absence of a sense of rights to information and the information definitely was not forthcoming spontaneously.

Q. Rona has partially answered this question, however, I was wondering about the selection process for sperm donors, the records that are kept and what legal recourse is available to them?

A. **Rona Achilles:** Well, from my own study, which is exploratory, the selection of the donors was completely ad hoc, it was who the physicians could find. And contrary to the rather legendary status of donors as medical students -- I did not get any medical students at all. That may be because it is a self-selected sample and only those donors who were willing to talk to me I spoke with.

The donors that I spoke to were everything from postal workers to mechanics, to police officers, to accountants, students, et cetera. They are supposed to be matched to the physical characteristics of either the recipient or the recipients partner.

It was my impression that the matching frequently went on in terms of who was available, especially if fresh sperm was being used. So selection is, as far as I know, not terribly rigorous.

C. **Jan Silverman:** I just want to add a personal experience in relation to donor selection. My husband and I went for an appointment when we were doing some preliminary

investigation for in vitro fertilization and they took a sperm sample from my husband and the doctor went on and on about what wonderful sperm he had and, "Oh, look at the count, look at the mobility." Meanwhile there I am, no tubes, feeling increasingly bad about my situation. And the doctors final line was "You must donate this sperm. It is a shame to waste this sperm." This did wonderful things to my sense of self.

Q. I just want to sidetrack a little bit. I wanted to know what the psychological effects are of the children that are born with the five parents and is there counselling available for them as they get older?

A. **Linda Williams:** Most IVF that is done in the world at the moment involves the woman's own eggs and her partner's sperm which creates the usual kind of parenting.

We do get some permutations and combinations of this but we do not know how this is going to affect children psychologically. Look at the famous Baby M case; how is that little girl going to feel when she grows up and comes to understand how exactly she came to be born.

Q. This is for Jan. The question may be too personal or you may not feel that it is possible to respond, but is adoption a solution?

A. **Jan Silverman:** No, adoption is not a solution. I think ultimately it helps tremendously! I think that you have to come to terms with the fact that what you want is a parenting experience. And I think what you have to realize is that adopting children is going to give you the parenting experience.

I think it is important to recognize, however, that it is a different type of parenting experience and it is wonderful. My children are everything and more I ever hoped they would be, but they are not the biological children that I had dreamt of since I was a little child.

I think ultimately it is a wonderful solution. I know that for me, despite seeking out psychiatric help and speaking with other people, it was adopting my children that made me as resolved as I ever think that I will be.

SUSAN McDONALD

Council Member
The Ontario Advisory Council on Women's Issues

Well, it has all been so interesting I do not know where to even begin summing up the day, perhaps go back to the very beginning of the day and just mention how moved I was by Bernice Martin's talk, her comments on the value of homemaking being an expression of self, a recreation of beauty and order out of chaos and the statement that housewifery and motherhood are all parts of the role models that we pass to our children. These are all thoughts that we might all have had in the office or the home but which we probably never have time to enunciate.

All the talks today have been right on the mark; what we on Council had hoped they would be and I thank you all for your participation.

Please come back tomorrow morning, 9:15. We have another day ahead of us of great discussions and ideas. We are going to talk about the economic value of homemakers and new perspectives on motherhood.

Thank you for coming today. Enjoy your evening and we will see you tomorrow.

OPENING REMARKS - JUNE 11, 1988

SANDRA KERR,
Acting President

Welcome back to: Motherhood in a Changing Society! My name is Sandra Kerr, I am the Acting President of The Ontario Advisory Council on Women's Issues. We have just spent a day and a half focussing in on **Motherhood in a Changing Society** and today is our final day.

This morning we will address the issues relating to work; and while we tried to present as many issues as we could, we know we did not address all the issues of motherhood. But I personally feel that there is one issue around the topic of work that really raises some interesting questions.

I think about this and I often tell a story when I am giving speeches in terms of my own experience and that is that my eldest son, when he was five, was playing house with the little girl up the street and, of course, Katie said to Gord "You be the daddy and you go to work." and, of course, my ears perked up and I said "Well, what are you going to do, Kate?" And Katie said "Well, I am the mommy, mommies do not work." And I thought about this and I looked around out neighborhood and I thought "Well, in a sense I suppose she is right. I mean, I went out to work but there were a lot of women in our community who stayed at home and were household moms. On the other hand there were a few who did go out and go to work."

And as I started to think about it I also began to listen to our vocabulary and I recognized quite quickly that she was absolutely right, that women, mommies do not work. And if you stop to think about it you too will hear what we say. In most households, in most of our society we recognize very quickly that daddy works; he goes to work.

Mommy, on the other hand, when she is busy is going to vacuum the rug, she is going to wash the dishes, going to clean the bathroom, is going to do the laundry, and when she goes to work she goes out to work.

Daddy, on the other hand, goes to work, but daddy also goes to work on the car or goes to do some work in the yard. Or if he is renovating he is going to work on the rec room where he is working. And not only that, he has got a workbench in the basement. So, that whatever daddies do, short of watching television, they work. Always! But not mommies. They only work when then go out to work. They never work within the household.

So, hopefully today our panelists are going to talk a little bit about this work that mommies never do.

PANEL ON: **THE ECONOMIC VALUE OF HOMEMAKERS AND HOUSEWORK**

MODERATOR: **DIANNE HARKIN**
Council Member

PANELISTS:

Maureen Kellerman. Maureen is a stay-at-home mother of two girls aged three and six and is a founding member of Mothers Are Women, an organization supporting women at home. She has served as Co-ordinator of the Midwifery Task Force of Ontario for the Ottawa region and has been active doing public education and lobbying for the legalization of midwifery. In 1987 she acted as Conference Organizer for the Inter-Faith Centre in Ottawa and prior to that taught pre-natal classes, both on a part-time basis. Maureen is currently the community organizer for the Cesarean Education and Support Group of Ottawa.

Kathleen Lahey. Kathleen is a feminist lawyer, teacher, writer, scholar and activist. She is currently a Professor in the Faculty of Law at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. She has participated in the development of an integrative feminist approach to legal scholarship, working on topics that range from child abuse, lesbian jurisprudence, and criminal law to taxation and liberal economic theory. Kathleen's research has received wide recognition, and she has published widely in equality rights and feminist theory. She is a co-editor of the **Canadian Journal of Women and Law**, has consulted lesbian and feminist litigation, and dreams of working in a law school that exists for women instead of against them.

Louise Dulude. Louise is the past president of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women. She served as President from June 1986 until May, 1988. She began working in the field of women's rights following her move to Ottawa from Montreal. She worked first as a liaison officer with women's groups for the Secretary of State Department then as a staff researcher for the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women and since 1978 as an independent researcher. Louise has written numerous reports on women, including **Women and the Personal Income Tax System, Women and Aging, Women and Poverty,** and **Pension Reform with Women in Mind.** In 1984, she obtained a Masters of Law degree from McGill University, the subject of her thesis being the taxation of the family in five western countries. She is presently working on her doctoral thesis.

DIANNE HARKIN

The Ontario Advisory Council on Women's Issues
Council Member

Good morning. I am just going to take a couple of minutes to share some thoughts with you. I could not get to sleep last night, and all I could think about was motherhood and what the speakers had been saying in the last day or so and it gets the adrenalin flowing, it gets you thinking and it gets you excited about the subject.

And as I thought about motherhood it dawned on me that motherhood is forever. I was talking to Bernice Martin about this yesterday and we seem to have come from similar backgrounds and we agreed that typical of our generation, we grew up in a large family and we were both the eldest child.

And for myself mothering started at age 4. I was able to diaper a baby at age four -- and that is not throw away Pampers. My mother said I could make a bed with hospital corners at age 4 and it just progressed from there, looking after baby sisters, baby brothers and so forth.

Then I became known as a good child care worker and then the neighbors wanted me to babysit all through my teens. Got married at 18 and started to raise my own children and their friends came in the house. And husbands, nobody has talked about the mothering the husbands require, and they need a lot of mothering, much more mothering than we wives need fathering.

Then we move to the next stage where our children are grown and now we become grandmothers, which is a joy but is exhausting; and here again we are nurturing and mothering and loving it.

Then husbands go through male menopause and retirement and so forth and they need more mothering. Now I find that my parents are getting older, and so are his parents, and they need that mothering and nurturing. So as far as I am concerned motherhood is forever.

Robert Munch recognized this in his children's book called **Love You Forever** and he wrote this lullaby for the mother who sang this to her child as an infant right up until he was a grown man and it went like this:

> "I will love you forever, I will like you for always, as long as I am living my baby you will be."

And it is so true!

I came across a very short essay written by a little girl who is eight years old. It is titled **What is a Grandmother** and is a tribute to grandmothers. I would like to share it with you because it is so precious.

"A grandmother is a lady who has no children of her own so she likes other people's little girls. A grandfather is a man grandmother. He goes for walks with boys and they talk about fishing and tractors and things like that. Grammas do not have to do anything except be there. They are so old they should not play hard or run. It is enough if they drive us to the supermarket where the pretend horse is and they have lots of dimes ready. If they take us for a walk they should slow down passed things like pretty leaves or caterpillars. They should never say 'Hurry Up'. Usually they are fat, but not too fat to tie kids shoes. They wear glasses and funny underwear and they take their teeth and gums off. It is better if they do not typewrite or play cards, except with us. They do not have to be smart, only answer questions like why dogs hate cats and how come God is not married. They do not talk baby talk like visitors do because it is hard to understand and when they read to us they do not skip or mind if it is the same story over and over again. Everybody should try to have one, especially if you do not have TV because grandmas are the only grown ups in the world who have got time."

And now I would like to introduce to you our first speaker, Maureen Kellerman.

MAUREEN KELLERMAN

Stay-at-home Mother and
Founding Member of Mothers Are Women

A recent article in Parenting Magazine noted:

> "From all the evidence it seems that the 1980s is the decade of the working mother. Her problems and proposed solutions to them dominate the lifestyle sections of daily newspapers, fill the pages of women's magazine and have been the focus of TV news special and Hollywood feature films."

I would also add that the concerns of "working" mothers have been reflected in policies and proposals developed by women's organization in the government in such areas as child care and pay equity. This attention and concern is quite justified. We all know that there has been an enormous increase in the number of women with small children who are part of the labour force.

However, there is a majority of women with preschoolers at home either full time or part time. But people naturally pay attention to what is new and different, particularly when it involves a significant social change. As a result, with the obvious exception of the organization R.E.A.L. Women, women who have remained at home have received very little attention from the media and the public. As well, they have not had an organized voice within the women's movement.

So what about women who remain at home caring for their children? Who are they? What are they needs and concerns as women at home? What is the public perception of homemakers and what value does society place on their work? And a particularly interesting question I think, to what extent does the women's movement support the choice of homemaking?

Let us start with the first question: Who are women at home? What comes to mind? That they are relics of the past? Obviously a dying breed? That being a homemaker is something that your mother did but not something that you would choose for yourself? That homemakers are traditional and conservative in their views? That they are misguided in their choice? That they are privileged, well-off women who can afford to stay at home?

Well, I would like to start with that first assumption because I think it is the strongest stereotype. Contrary to popular opinion at-home mothers are not necessarily privileged. They are less likely than their working counterparts to have a post-secondary education and they are not necessarily in a high income group. For example, in 1985 in Canada 55 per cent of women at home with a child under six had husbands earning less than $30,000 a year.

We often hear it said that the majority of families need two incomes nowadays just to pay the bills. The assumption that usually follows is that families with the mother at home must be well-off financially. However, I think that it makes just as much sense to assume that such a family is in fact having trouble making ends meet.

Another common assumption is that mothers who stay at home with their kids are likely to be traditionally minded and conservative in their views. The Canadian magazine **Saturday Night** recently exploited this stereotype on the cover of its May issue which trumpets **Feminists v.s. Homemakers**. This cover also says:

> "Feminists used to think men were the enemy until they met the housewives."

This article is about the National Action Committee on the Status of Women and R.E.A.L. women.

But in my experience women at home are widely divergent in their political views and, yes, I have met numerous at-home mothers who describe themselves as feminists.

What about the view that women at home are misguided, that they are making a choice that is detrimental to their own wellbeing as women? There is certainly good reason to view the role of a woman at home with misgivings. Feminists have developed a thorough critique of homemaking, and we have heard some of that already in presentations so far. They point out that mothering and housework have little status. More importantly, the work can isolate women in the home, preventing them from becoming a serious threat to men in the public sphere and to the power and dominance of men. In addition, homemaking makes a woman financially dependant and can leave her destitute in old age or in the event of a marriage breakdown. Years in the home can also make it very difficult to re-enter the work force.

The economic vulnerability of women at home is of particular concern because the family is not always a safe haven for women and children. As well, I think homemaking to a certain extent can encourage a woman to neglect her own needs and to always put her family first. And it can encourage men to assume that child care and household responsibilities are primarily women's work.

In my experience, while many women at home may not use overtly feminist language to describe these problems, they are aware of most of them. In numerous discussions with women at home I found that the same concerns are expressed time and again. Women find isolation and lower self-esteem major occupational hazards of being a woman at home. They describe stresses due to living on one income and some express an uncomfortable awareness of being financially dependant.

Some have a sense that they are no longer part of the real world, that they are on the sidelines. Many have concerns about losing marketable skills and about their ability to re-enter the work force. And some have concerns about losing their sense of an independent identity separate from family. But by far the strongest consensus about women at home is that being a full time mother lacks status, recognition and support in our society. And mothers at home are invariably quite sensitive about this lack of status. Most feel that there is a general societal pressure to work outside the home, an implicit message that any reasonably intelligent, reasonably well-educated woman would not spend any significant period of time at home raising children. And some mothers I have spoken to have experienced direct challenges about their decision from family, former co-workers and friends. Given

the social climate it is not surprising that women at home often feel defensive about their choice and at times criticizes and unappreciated.

So, you may be thinking, why do some women continue to choose full time homemaking and mothering if they have such ambivalent feelings about their choice? I think the answer to that question has two parts, the first has to do with the desire to be with our children and the second has to do with the question of choice.

Many mothers at home have made the decision to remain at home because they want more time with their children and they are not comfortable giving their children over to someone else's care, not matter how qualified that substitute care giver is.

In discussing their reasons mothers at home sometimes talk about the impossibility of sandwiching quality time into the beginning and the end of the day. They mention their desire to pass on their own values and ways of dealing with the world to their kids. Some say they do not want to interrupt breast feeding before their child is ready; all talk about how much they enjoy witnessing the tremendous growth and development that takes place in the early years. For many women these positive aspects balance the negative factors I outlined earlier.

The other part of the answer to the question of why women decide to be at home has to do with the matter of choice. Too often we talk about choosing to work outside the home or choosing to be at home as if women today had this smorgasbord of options that they can choose from. I think we should recognize that women at home may not be able to find a job which would cover their child care costs and increased costs for food, transportation and clothing. It may simply not be worth her while to work outside the home. And then again she may not be able to locate daycare of acceptable quality, whatever its cost.

And many women at home feel that the price to pay for trying to juggle family and domestic responsibilities with paid work is just too high. They would rather attempt to live their lives sequentially, setting aside a few years exclusively for child rearing and then resuming paid work when children are older. Similarly there are many mothers in the labour force whose reasons for being there are primarily financial ones. I think it is safe to say that most women who are working full time would like to be spending more time with their children.

Most mothers at home today are not making a long term career out of homemaking, most are choosing to remain at home full time only while their children are small. Since most women today are having fewer children, one or two, women at home are an ever changing group as they move into and out of the labour force.

However, too often we separate mothers at home and mothers in the work force into two distinct groups, assuming that they are somehow quite different from each other. But women working in the labour force have not escaped much of the work traditionally done by women at home. They are still shouldering most of the domestic and emotional work of the family.

An increasing number of families are led by single women who do not have a partner to share responsibilities with and in two parent families it has been well documented that husbands rarely share family and domestic responsibilities equally with their working wives. If you are interested in seeing some statistics about that the March, 1988 issue of the **New Internationalist** is completely devoted to housework and homemaking.

As well, women in the labour force have traditionally been ghettoized in jobs that are often an extension of the kinds of work women do in the home, service-oriented jobs which are usually ill paid and low in status. The low status work done for free by women in the home is a magnified, more extreme version of the kind of work that many women do in the labour force. For example, it is no accident that child care workers and domestic workers are almost always women and they are usually very poorly paid.

I doubt that much of the paid work women do will ever be properly valued until we start to value the work that women have been doing for free. Valuing the traditional kinds of work done by women means making this work more visible and believing that it is indeed work.

In our society we have a great deal of trouble recognizing unpaid work as work and, as Sandra pointed out, our language about women's work and about homemaking is revealing. In response to that dreaded question "What do you do?" many mothers at home answer "I don't work." Most women, I think, have given up saying, "Oh well, I am just a housewife." but you usually do hear that comment "I don't work." But I think more of us are learning to say "I don't work outside the home" or "I don't work for pay."

The work involved in domestic labour, mother work and housework has remained largely invisible, partly because it has been hidden in the home, but also because men have refused to participate in it, remaining willfully ignorant of just what is involved.

Yesterday Bernice Martin pointed out that part of the problem may be that women have trouble letting go of one of their few sources of power, but mothers at home themselves often have trouble recognizing what they do as work, although they bristle at the question "What do you do all day?" because of the implied suggestion that whatever they do cannot amount to much.

The work is obscured because at the end of the day the meals are eaten, the clothes are dirty and the house is untidy, yet again. So often, the day disappears in a blur of interruptions, small upsets and unrecognized accomplishments. As well, we assume that work which we are doing out of love, particularly child care, is somehow not work.

Although mother work and housework are often invisible and lacking in recognition domestic work is obviously socially useful and important work. I believe that society will only value domestic work sufficiently when some of the parenting done in the home is paid work and when men participate more equally in domestic work.

I do not believe that homemakers should be paid wages for housework from public funds since all families have housework to do. However, I do believe that parental care of young children should be recognized as part of a comprehensive child care policy. Maternity leave must be lengthened and benefits substantially improved. Parental leave with benefits which would allow fathers to care for their children should also be implemented. And it was, I think, encouraging to see the recent ruling from the Federal Court on the issue of maternity benefits. Ways must be developed to make parental benefits available to all families with newborns. At present considerably less than half the women giving birth in Canada receive maternity benefits from unemployment insurance.

As we move towards greater governmental support of non-parental child care we must be careful not to overlook once again the child care work done by women at home. This too is deserving of support and must be integrated into any child care policy which claims to be comprehensive. Increased governmental funding of non-parental child care, although vitally necessary, will penalize parents who care for their children at home unless mechanisms can be found which will also support parental care. And I think such mechanisms could include the funding of community-based support services such as parent/child resource centres as well as direct benefits to parents.

Some feminists balk at supporting parental child care, objecting to anything which would seemingly encourage women to remain at home since this choice can be detrimental to women. But is our only answer that women should flee the home in an attempt to escape the burdens of mother work and housework? I think it is time we acknowledge the ambiguities and paradoxes in our lives as Bernice Martin suggested yesterday. Parenting can be tedious and burdensome, but it can also be creative and challenging. And, as Bernice pointed out, housework is not simply a nuisance. The home is not always a safe place, but it is not simply a place of exploitation and oppression for women. The home can be a place where parents, with support, can lovingly nurture their children.

Although we are increasingly moving child care into the public sphere there are still parental and household responsibilities that for the most part will remain in the private sphere. We must take the burden of this work seriously. The importance of domestic work must be reflected in changes to the work-place which would allow both men and women to balance family responsibilities with labour force participation. (I found it encouraging to hear yesterday from the Honourable Greg Sorbara that the Ontario Government considers this to be a priority.) Such changes include availability of flexible working hours, job sharing, part time work with pro-rated benefits, family responsibility leave, which could be used, for example, to care for a sick child. And I think in the longer run, a shorter work week. The work-place has been designed by men and for men who have had women available to take care of child rearing and homemaking. We cannot expect women to achieve success in the work-place in the ways in which men have simply by providing non-parental child care alone.

While feminists are rightly critical of the role of women at home, it is presumptuous, I believe, to be judgmental about the

choices women make in such an imperfect world. Feminists must continue to affirm child care and domestic work as the real work that it is, and to support those who are doing such work.

In less than a generation we have moved away from a monolithic model of motherhood, a single culturally sanction "correct" way of doing things and now there are many possible ways of mothering. But having moved away from the one supposedly right way, a mother doing all the child care from birth through adolescence, we seem to have lost our right to unconditional support for our decisions. No matter what arrangements you make for your child's care or whether you do it all yourself there will be people, both individuals and organizations who will be critical. I think we need to be gentler with one another and with ourselves, recognizing the enormous social changes that we are in the midst of.

And what of mothers at home? Are they a dying breed? I would hope not since I believe that most mothers need more time with their young children than many are presently experiencing. But I hope that the role evolves to include fathers as well as mothers and that ultimately parents can combine family responsibilities and labour force participation more easily.

Thank you.

KATHLEEN LAHEY

Professor
Faculty of Law, Queen's University

It is a real opportunity, I think, to talk about some of these issues in the way that they have been posed during this conference because a lot of what's going on in feminist and in non-feminist circles is difficult to discuss in a constructive way.

I would like to outline what I see as some of the biggest problems for women to resolve at this point in the feminist movement before going into more detail of the analysis that I will present.

The first issue that I see, and Maureen has already framed this very nicely for you, is the tension that women are supposed to be resolving between involvement in the wage force and working in the home. We are told if we choose to stay and put our energies into home-focussed work than we are there because of burn out or because we cannot stand the lack of ability to integrate waged work with mothering work. I do not think that women are making that choice out of any sense of burn out, but rather a lot of women have decided that they are simply not going to endure the super exploitation that is imposed on them because they have to work for very low wages and perform a very high level of work in the form of mothering work and home centered work.

That is one of the things that is happening and I think we have to be careful about how we describe what this issue is. We have to assume that women are making conscious choices out of some sense of survival and personal advancement.

The second issue that we should be sensitive to is the fact that, let us face it, feminists have been identified as middle class people for quite a long time in North America and there is a tendency to assume that any discussion about women in the home is about women from middle class locations trying to impose those values on another generation of children. But, as Maureen said, if we look at who is doing the home centred mothering a lot of times these are women who are also located in what I would describe as the shadow economy, women whose wage force participation is not even visible to us because they are not allowed in the sanctioned structures of economic thought, to report their economic activities and women who, therefore, are more or less invisible except as mothers.

And the last sort of preliminary point that I would like to make is that there is a real danger, I think, that we are not giving sufficient recognition to the overall construction of social discourse that is taking place. And I would draw your attention to not only the Shackter case, which was decided recently in the Federal Court, but also to Karen Andrews case.

Karen Andrews applied for OHIP for herself and her lover and her two children. She was told that because there was essentially, I gather, no man in the family there could not be a family. At the same time, virtually within a couple of months, the Federal Court

told Mr. Shackter that his contribution to the parenting activities in the family was so important that he was entitled to have, not only maternity benefits redefined as paternity benefits but also he was entitled to have a very important point of constitutional law doctrine reversed for the first time in North America for his benefit.

So I think that what we have to be careful about is, on the one hand, the invisibility and denial of lesbian existence in mothering work while at the same time glorifying the mothering work of heterosexual males. I think that is a double bind that we have to be sensitive to and is representative of the kind of issue that we are being asked to resolve.

Anyway, I want to go into a more academic discussion of these issues by talking about the construction of women's disadvantaged position as home centred workers and specifically as women who provide child care work in a particular set of social and economic relations knows as mothering. And I want to focus on two aspects of this construction of women's status. The first is the economic context within which women do this work. I want to draw attention to four areas of analysis that sometimes are discussed separately but that, I think, need to be brought together in a unified framework in order to get some understanding of where strategies might take us. So in looking at the economic construction of women's status, I want to talk about general concepts of economic thought and then, what I describe as the "gaps" between women and men in work output, in wages received and in opportunities for consumption. And I want to attempt to locate women's non-wage work in this analysis.

The second main point that I want to talk about is how to use an analysis that is sensitive to gender and to class location in evaluating strategies for struggling with the particularly disadvantaged situation of women who are located in the home.

So to go to my first point, which is the economic construction of women's poverty as mothers, I want to begin by drawing to your attention information that we all know, and that is OECD figures that go back some time now, that reveal that on a global basis, that is on an international basis, women receive only 10 per cent of the income in the world and they only hold one per cent of the work. These OECD figures also demonstrate that women do two-thirds of all work that is done in the world for less than 10 per cent of the income.

I was intrigued by these figures because I wanted to know two things: first of all, where do women in Canada stack up on this kind of analysis and, secondly, what does that mean about the levels of women's poverty elsewhere in the world. If women in Canada do earn better than 10 per cent of all income, then how little must women in other countries earn.

I think that to answer this question of how women in Canada stack up we have to look at the construction of economic thought, the allocation of work, the allocation of wages and the allocation of consumption. And I will just share with you the progress, if you can call it that, that I have made in drawing these strands together.

My first question is how economic thought has even created the illusion that women, who actually do two-thirds of the work of the world, do not work. How it is that economic thought can even make women invisible. If you look in any beginning economics textbook you will discover that economic transactions are invariably described in language that completely submerges women into gender neutral entities known as firms or households or other organizations with which they are associated. So women are not even considered to be economically significant beings, except to the extent that they are located in households. Nor does basic economic thought consider it significant that the consumption functions that are performed by the household are in fact largely female functions or that the income which is used to finance this consumption is largely considered to be a male wage even when it is actually a female wage.

So when a household -- meaning a female -- transforms goods like food or clothing into wellbeing for members of her family the labour that she performs in effecting that transformation becomes completely invisible and does not surface at all in the economic equation. So by engaging in planning, shopping, transporting, storing, cleaning, cooking, serving food and by cleaning the house up afterwards, by maintaining the eating area in usable condition, by scheduling household activities, by creating an atmosphere within which people can even bring themselves to eat a meal, a woman is engaged in economic activities that are completely invisible from the point of view of economists. However, the entire economy, which is considered to be measured by consumption functions like this, depends on the fact that she does do this work.

Now, I think that using an example like this is really simply looking at economic thought through the eyes of women and this is something that women have only begun to do quite recently. As a result of looking at economics through the eyes of women, women are able to see that things like gross national product, gross domestic product or other measures of the output of an economy, are actually completely distorted figures and do not take into account two-thirds of all of the work that is being done in a particular economy in any one period of measurement.

As a result, most of the energy of traditional economists has gone into simply rearranging the male economy and giving us more and more refined insights into ways in which men transfer wealth back and forth between themselves. However, the role that women play in creating that wealth and in creating the human beings who are involved in the transfer and transformation of that wealth are completely invisible. Therefore, most economists cannot tell us what the overall financial significance of women's non-waged work is, nor can they tell us what the value of women's mothering work is in traditional economic terms.

In an attempt to come to some sort of measure I have, therefore, turned to two areas of traditional economic investigation. One is to look more closely at the construction of the so-called "work gap", which is the gap between the amount of work that men do and the amount of work that women do -- because if women do two-thirds of the work that must mean that men are doing one-third, and the construction of the wage gap.

So my second question is: What do we know about the amount of work that women actually do. Is there a two-thirds/one-third breakdown in Canada? Is it invariable? Can we demonstrate that it exists even today in Canada?

The beginning point is to look first of all at the percentage of women who are in the work force, the waged work force relative to the number of men. I think it is flawed to say that just because women constitute only 45 per cent of the waged work force that therefore they only do 45 per cent of all of the work done in Canada. That creates the assumption that the rest of the time that women have available to work is spent either in consumption or leisure activities.

However, one of the first studies that was carried out on this point, (actually is an Australian study that should be replicated in Canada) tried to find out how women were actually using their leisure time, what kinds of activities they were engaged in when they were not engaged in work, doing only 45 per cent of the work.

This study was part of a feasibility study to set up a neighborhood recreational service for women in the community and the researchers were instructed to find out why women were not using leisure time facilities that had been set up for them in other communities. These facilities consisted of things like squash and tennis courts, educational and social programs, and so on. The researchers used a detailed questionnaire and interview program going from house to house to try to find out what it was that women liked to do in their leisure time, what days, what months would be best for certain activities, what programs they wanted to have added to the agenda. And they discovered, much to their dismay, that when it came down to scheduling the actual amount of leisure time that women had available to go to a community centre, there was only an average per person of 20 minutes of leisure time per week, so they did not have any opinions on the questions being asked by the researchers.

The study concluded that women did not need a fancy community centre, they did not need a different configuration of squash courts, an so on. What they needed was respite care so that they could sit down for part of the day, husbands and children who would share some of their considerable leisure time with them; and they also concluded that women overall needed less work to do, which I think is intuitively obvious to the most casual observer, but it took a university-funded study to document this as part of women's realities.

Now, there have been other studies, some of them carried out in Canada, some carried out in the United States, seeking to give some kind of scientific measure to just how much time women do actually spend working in North America. One of the myths floating through popular opinion and through the women's movement is that it is only women with small children who are particularly disadvantaged when it comes to the amount of work they have to do. It is only women who have small children and completely non-co-operative husbands who have only 20 minutes of leisure time every week.

First of all, in North America it has been demonstrated in study after study that women spend between 90 and 100 hours a week working. That is your base line figure. Men spend between 37 and 48 hours a week in work, and this includes everything from washing walls, replacing roof shingles, taking out the garbage to washing laundry, preparing food, taking the bus to work and taking the car in to get it fixed. Everything is defined as work that falls into those kinds of categories and the base line figure is that women spend nearly twice as much, sometimes more than twice as much time each week actually working as compared to men.

Now, these figures demonstrate, when you put them on a time line, that non-waged women devote to work in the home about 50 hours a week, and this figure has not changed for the last 50 years. So despite the increase in technological supports for women, despite the increase of the level of modernization of home work of various kinds, despite polyester fabrics, dryers that dry efficiently, and so on, women consistently for the last 50 years have spent about 50 hours a week in non-waged work. But the difference, of course, is that now with women in the 1980s, about half (of all women) spend another full work week in waged labour as well.

So we see that entry into wage work has not significantly reduce the amount of time women spend on non-waged work nor, perhaps more importantly, has it resulted in increased male participation in non-waged work despite all of the talk about changes in sex roles. The most optimistic study I have found to date, and I have looked at a fair number of them, indicates that employed women who have no children still spend 30 hours a week in non-waged work while their husbands (this is families without children) contribute only five hours a week to work.

This information is useful in demonstrating that it is not really having children alone which is considered to be the great luxury of staying at home. On the contrary, it is perhaps the great luxury of having a husband that increases the amount of work that women have to do in the home. We need more information on how much non-waged work women have to perform when they live by themselves or when they live in collective groups with other women, because my sense is that those figures become dramatically different.

Now, in terms of actually fixing a dollar value on the work that women do, I think one of the best places to start is to look at the work of farm women who are generally recognized as being the kinds of women who have to work literally 17 or 18 hours a day. For some reason it is easier for people to say that farm women do this kind of work even though mothers may not.

Using very conservative valuation methods the average value of a women's work week, if you take the average farm woman as an example, is slightly under $25,000 a year. That is the economic value of the work that she does, assuming a minimum wage to calculate that. Now, of course, that does not take into account that fact that the average hourly rate of pay for waged men is slightly under $12 an hour, it is not $4 an hour. And it is these differences in wage levels that accounts for the fact that even when women's non-waged work is valued at a reasonable figure

it still leaves women relatively economically disadvantaged compared to men.

We might want to pursue some of this in the discussion period, but where does all of this take us? Well, my sense is that women first of all have got to become much more insistent on having all kinds of work that they do taken as being work and insist on allowing that to be treated as hours worked at a reasonable rate of pay for purposes of correcting the economic equation.

Once that is done, the maldistribution of wealth in Canada becomes much easier to criticize; it becomes easier to see that tiny little changes like employment equity or small changes in the level of the child care expense deduction, or additions to the mother's allowance on a very conservative level make a difference. All of these things are just the tiniest little drop in the bucket and I think that women have to become clear that if (women) were to withdraw the kinds of work that they do, whether it be in waged work or in home centred work, whether it be mothering work or in work that is associated with other aspects of being in the home, if women were to withdraw this work the economy of Canada would come to a screeching halt. It would not even make it past the next meal time!

The first point is for women to understand how absolutely crucial all of our activities are to the very existence of our culture as it is presently constructed. And then, when we have that sense of our own importance, I think it is going to be easier to get respect and economic support for women who do particular kinds of work, including the work of mothering.

Thank you.

LOUISE DELUDE

Past-President,
National Action Committee on the Status of Women

Motherhood is not at all a new issue for the women's movement and there have been women's groups working on it for at least 20 years. For example, the Council of Women and the Affiace, one of the biggest groups in Quebec recommended about 25 to 20 years ago that homemakers be included in the Canada and Quebec Pension Plan. It was also one of the main demands of NAC when we were set up in 1972; so it has a very long tradition in the women's movement.

It became a political issue on the men's (political) scene about 10 years ago and at that point, because there were many women's groups asking for it, all three major federal political parties were in favour of the principle, but they would say "Unfortunately, there are many practical difficulties that make it impossible to be implemented." Which, of course, got them off the hook. They did not have to do anything about it.

What happened next is that women's groups and women researchers started working on those so-called "practical difficulties" and in no time at all we had found answers to all of them so politicians were really on the spot and it was something concrete that they had to answer from that point on.

And at this point the federal Progressive Conservative Party and the Liberals are on record as being in favour of the inclusion and the personal coverage of homemakers in the Canada Pension Plan. The NDP is the only party that is opposed. And provincially both largest provinces, Quebec and Ontario, are also in favour. And the polls show that 80 per cent of the population of Canada, male and female -- there is very little difference between the two -- support the inclusion of homemakers in the Canada Pension Plan.

So why is nothing getting done? One reason is that the idea has strong opponents, and I will come back to that later. Another reason is that politicians are telling me that they feel very little pressure from women on this issue. That is very important to remember and I will come back to that too.

What I would like to do now is backtrack to these feminist studies on the subject of pensions for homemakers. They were not studies about pensions for homemakers, they were studies about women and pensions in general. And what happened when researchers looked at the question, both for men and women. The main reason for this is that our public pension system, the Canada Pension Plan and Quebec Pension Plan in Quebec, only replaces 25 per cent of the earnings you had during your lifetime, and the Old Age Pension gives about 15 per cent of an average income.

So overnight you drop from 100 per cent to 30-35 per cent of what you had before, 25, 30 or 40 per cent. The drop in income is absolutely staggering and nobody can survive and

continue with the same standard of living! As a result the main recommendation of all the studies done by women's groups, and labour groups as well, was to double the scope of the Canada Pension Plan so that it would provide 50 per cent of previous earnings rather than 25.

Now, the treatment of homemakers was a subsidiary issue which is linked to that, because if you have lousy pensions and you give these pensions to homemakers they are going to get lousy pensions too.

Now looking only at the question of the treatment of homemakers we found that there are now three elements within the Canada Pension Plan that affect homemakers particularly. The main one is widow's pension. And the reason why it is homemakers who are mainly affected is that if you are already in the labour force and you are making the maximum earnings you are not eligible for a widow's pension because the ceiling on the benefits would be the same. This is after the age of 65 you would not be eligible. So the result is that the main beneficiaries of widow's pensions are homemakers.

The second measure that affects women, homemakers, particularly within the Canada Pension Plan, is the splitting of credits on divorce. It is called "splitting" but that is really a misnomer because you do not actually split the benefits. It is an equalization of the benefits of both spouses for the years they were married that takes place. This has been in force for a number of years.

And thirdly, there is one feature (that has been in force in the Canada Pension Plan since 1983), which is the only real direct recognition of the work of homemakers, and that is the child care drop out provision. And briefly what this consists of: I mentioned how the pension amounts to 25 per cent of your average earnings over your lifetime. Now, if you are out of the labour force during those years they would before have been counted as zero, so of course your average earnings would go down because of those years.

Now, the drop out provision says that as long as you are taking care of at least one child under the age of seven, those years will be dropped out of your pension calculation. So in fact, what happens is that your pension is raised as a result of those years not being counted and this is free. It is fully subsidized.

When we looked at these three main elements and analyze them we thought that we saw that they were problematic. If you look at who benefits from this main provision for homemakers you see that it is a smaller and smaller proportion of women because you have to be married to the same man until death, and we know that those kinds of marriages are getting less and less. So with the rate of divorce the widow's pensions reaches less and less people.

And also, one obvious problem with them is that the last spouse, usually the last widow, gets everything. So it is winner take all and you can have been married just a few years and you get the whole pension even though there might have

been a first wife who was married to the man for 50 years. She would get zero widow's pension.

There are other problems with the widow's pensions. It is unfair in the sense that the benefits are a percentage of what the husband's entitlement was, so that the better off the family, the bigger the benefit. And when you consider that this is fully subsidized by everybody else who participates in the Canada Pension Plan, even the poorest participants, you see that it is unfair.

It is also based on many obsolete assumptions. The most obviously ridiculous assumption that, in the plan if a spouse, a widow or widower was 45 or more when they became widowed than they were totally dependant on the deceased; and since men are allowed the same pensions as women as widowers that means that we are assuming that a 45 year old man whose wife dies was totally dependant on her, which is obviously ridiculous.

Now, the problems with the splitting. The splitting on divorce, the equalizing, were not with principle. Everybody agreed with the principle that these benefits belong to both spouses, they had earned them together while they were married. And this is an extension of the family law gains that we made in every province where, at the end of the marriage, there is an (more or less) equal division of what was earned during the marriage. So there was no problem with the principle but with the application. It was voluntary and most people opted out. Most women gave them up in exchange for quite small benefits.

And in 1987, this was improved and now there cannot be any more opting out under the Canada Pension Plan.

As for the drop out provision it is, as I mentioned, the only real recognition of homemakers work, and the only work of homemakers that it recognizes is the work of caring for children under the age of seven.

The problems are that many homemakers with children under the age of seven are not covered by the drop out provision because they have to have been in the system to benefit. So if you have, for example, a farm wife who was in the labour force just a couple of years, or not at all, and who had 10 children and reached the age of 65 she would not get anything, because the drop out provisions is for those who were in the system and dropped out and went back in. So you see some homemakers with children under the age of seven are covered and others are not under this provision.

There is, also under that provision, the fact that it maintains that by dropping out those years that you are with children, it maintains your average at the same level. So if your average is higher, if you are better off, if your earnings are higher you get more of a benefit. So again, in here the way the drop out provision is designed, people who are better off get more, even though it is paid for by everybody, it is subsidized by the poorest as well as the richest.

So the conclusion of these studies was that, one, splitting on divorce and other splitting is universally recognized and acceptable. However, it is not really a homemakers pension at all because in the case of a full time homemaker, what it does is it takes the husband's pension and divides it in two so there is no recognition of the value of homemakers work.

In the case of widow's pensions, it is clear that they are totally inadequate and more and more obsolete as the family, the couple unit, becomes more and more unstable. We must find another basis for benefits in the future!

And final conclusions on these studies: if we make the decision that homemakers must be protected under our pension plan then we must build a system that covers all of the homemakers who are in the same situation, which the drop out provision does not do.

So the basic question is, do we want homemakers to have coverage? And in the case of homemakers with children under the age of seven, it is a fait accompli. Because of the drop out provision it is widely accepted so whatever anybody may feel about it, it is done, the recognition is there. Most women do get covered by the Canadian Pension Plan under the drop out provision while they take care of children under the age of seven at home. And it is clear that women who have won that benefit would never let it go.

The harder questions then are what do we do about the other homemakers? Who are these other homemakers who do not have children under the age of seven? They are mainly in two groups, they are older women and women who have children between seven and seventeen. And if we look at the latter group -- and the last figures are from 1985 -- you see that only 51 per cent of women with children between the ages of seven and seventeen are working outside the home full time, full year. So it is exactly half of mothers with older children who are not full time in the labour force.

The other group, the older women, were mothers who did stay home a long time and continued after that to stay home. And there is a small group of miscellaneous people who took care of disabled family members, brothers, sisters, parents that they were homemakers for.

Now, we at the National Action Committee (NAC), after looking at this, made the decision that all homemakers should be covered and we defined homemakers as people who do homemaking, who keep a home for somebody else.

The reasons why we decided everybody should be covered are two main reasons. The first one is simple justice. Keeping house for somebody else is work. It is work and if we see somebody in the labour force who does it we do not doubt for a minute that it is work.

And secondly, if you look at the Canada Pension Plan and Quebec Pension Plan legislation, says that if you get paid in kind, (i.e., unpaid work in the home, homemakers get paid in kind), you have to report that as income for tax purposes, for

Canada Pension Plan purposes. The only reason that wives do not report this income in kind for Canada Pension Plan purposes, is because the law forbids it. It specifically says in the law that family members who work only for income in kind cannot participate in the Canada Pension Plan. In my opinion I think that if we took a case under the Charter, a discrimination case that there are good chances we would win. So we see four reasons of justice alone that all people who are doing homemaking for others should be included.

The other main reason why we want to include everybody is self-interest. The fact that homemakers are so exploited as workers at the present time is bad for all women, not just for homemakers themselves. What results, and both Maureen and Kathleen made reference to this, is that you have a huge pool of cheap labour of women, millions of women who are financially disadvantaged and who are willing to work for a very low wage and this affects all women's wages. To say there are homemakers and there are other women, is wrong because we are all linked together and homemakers are the weakest economic link.

I think it is important to specify that even though we want all of categories of homemakers to be covered, there is an important distinction between those who are taking care of young children and disabled relatives and the others. And the reason for distinction is that if a woman or a man is taking care of very young children or disabled relatives they are doing work which is for all of society. If they were not doing it the state would have to pay for it. They would have to be in an institution or in a kind of foster home that the government would pay for. So you can really say that women who are at home taking care of young children are all civil servants. It is true when you think of it. Therefore, they are in a particular situation and should be covered free in the Canada Pension Plan because all of us benefit from it!

Now, in the case of other homemakers who do not have very young children and are mainly keeping a home for their husband, which of course still work, and is as valuable as many other jobs, though, it is the husband who mainly benefits and therefore he should pay -- he should pay the full costs of the coverage as a general rule. We have other provisions to deal with the very poor, but the general rule is that the husband should pay.

Now, how this system would work is quite simple. One would assume that all homemakers have an income of half the average wage, and at the present time this would be about $13,000 a year. And the reason this amount was chosen was because it was an objective amount, it is not like the minimum wage that is a political amount that you have to fight for to increase it every year. So it is an objective amount. And it makes sense because if you were to hire a full time housekeeper nowadays you would pay about that much. The women would not receive this income but they would have a pension calculated on the basis as if they had made that income.

If there are no children or disabled family members then the adult who benefits, usually the husband, would have an

obligation, (it would be mandatory) to pay the premiums for this homemaker coverage on his own tax form every year.

In the case of part time, which was one of the tricky problems to be solved, the solution that was finally accepted was that if you come under the definition of homemaker, and you make less than half the average wage, ($13,000), automatically it would be assumed that your reason for making less is that you are a part time homemaker. So you would participate in the Canada Pension Plan on the basis of your own earnings. Let us say you make $8,000, so up to $8,000 you would participate in the Canada Pension Plan on your own, and for the difference between $8,000 and $13,000, you would be assigned credits as a homemaker. And, of course, you would get a benefit at the age of 65 on your own.

Now, there are many people opposed to this. I mentioned that the opposition was very strong and business, labour and bureaucrats are opposed to this. Business is opposed because business is always opposed to everything and any kind of extension of our social programs is something that they very much hate. Labour and bureaucrats are opposed because they like the present system. They are groups that are overwhelmingly male and they like the idea of the widow's pensions that particularly link the woman's benefits to those of the husband. And I have had many discussions with labour people about even trying to change the widow's pension so that it would no longer go all to the last wife but go on a pro rated basis to all the wives and this has been rejected. So you can see that it is this old idea of the wife as dependant, that is still very entrenched.

There is a refusal on the part of both these sectors; union and bureaucrats, and business, to recognize that work in the home is work at all. And you can see this in the examples that they give. They say, for example, that it would be unfair to give pensions to homemakers, it would be unfair to women who are in the labour force because the women in the labour force actually work and those who are low income would get no more than the women who are at home. Now, the only reason you might think this is discriminatory is if you think that women at home do not work, which I happen not to believe and I think many people would agree with me.

This attitude, furthermore, is inconsistent, because they also support the drop out provision which, of course, is coverage for homemakers work of women who take care of young children.

There are homemakers who are on the NAC Pensions Committee who say that they feel somewhat sheepish about being homemakers and so they feel like they do not really want to push forward their cause and be strong in asking for pensions for homemakers. This very much weakens the case politically because politicians are weather vanes, they can feel that very strongly.

Many other feminists think that homemakers work should not be recognized. I think that some of them get so far carried away that they would defend the rights of prostitutes, for example, to do the work that they have chosen to do but think that

homemakers right to choose their own work should not be recognized and should be discouraged. It seems to me, to be an irrational reaction. We say "This is bad, this traditional work and we should get away from it." I think that we can say that there is a syndrome of the fear of home work, of homemaking among feminists and among women. We are afraid to recognize this simply as what it is, as work, and that there is nothing wrong with being a homemaker, even just for a husband. When people do it for pay we think there is nothing wrong with it.

I think it is essential that we start taking that attitude towards working in the home and also towards part time work. We have not been fighting very energetically on the front of part time work, even though there have been many resolutions passed by practically every women's group, we have not fought for this as energetically as we should. Do you know that we do not have equal pay for the same work for part time workers in this country, not at the federal level and not in any province. And we have not been pushing for this. We should, when elections come about, make this one of our major platforms. And the situation is urgent because what is happening with the federal government is that they made proposals, in a paper issued last fall that would do the following: it would have the effect that all women who are 35 and less at the present time would not be eligible for long term widow's pensions in the future. Now, even though we do not like widow's pensions we know that they are needed as an intermediary measure before, and until we introduce pensions for homemakers themselves directly.

But you see what is happening is that governments and powerful people are taking advantage of our disorganization and our lack of resolve on these issues to take the little bit that homemakers have. And the result, if we do not act, is that homemakers are going to be even more exploited and since the economic link between all women is very strong we are going to end up suffering, all of us, in the long run.

So, in closing, I urge you all to get involved. The issue of pensions for homemakers is the easiest one within the women's movement to get involved with because giving a pension will not affect people's decisions to go into the labour force because they get no benefit at all until the age of 65. So that is why it is the one that we can most unite behind.

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR:

Q. I would like to direct this question to Kathleen Lahey, please.

You mentioned a marked difference between the number of hours per week that men and women actually work. I have found often that men perceive women as being inefficient because they have to spend so many hours to accomplish the work they do. Is that something that you have encountered in any of your studies and how can this be answered?

A. **Kathleen Lahey:** That problem has not really be directly addressed in the literature, but what is developing is an appreciation for women's abilities to manage multiple roles simultaneously.

And it is interesting to see how the older time and motion studies which were developed for measurement of factory efficiency and so on, concentrated on stripping people's conduct and workloads down to just one task at a time as a way to measure efficiency. Now people are beginning to discover that women are probably some of the most efficient people around. Oppression does generate efficiency because you have to get more done in the same amount of time. So the literature is starting to use this concept of multiple functions or multiple roles.

In my own work what I have tried to do is to take multiple roles and use that as a basis for increasing the theoretical rate of pay that you assign to what a woman does. So if a woman can take care of children at the same time that she can do the laundry or cook a meal or at the same time that she can write a Ph.D. dissertation or keep somebody amused and happy and so on, then it seems to me that what we need to do is to assign a higher value to that work rather than a lower value.

I think that what you are pinpointing is one of the worst problems in social attitudes because I think that that is an example of how women's work is devalued. It takes you all day to watch the kids, whereas if a man takes responsibility for child care -- this is not totally stereotypical even today -- he will maybe be exhausted after 40 minutes and have no idea of how to watch the kids. Now I think that is inefficiency.

Q. I am concerned that a woman who does choose to stay at home and who is then abandoned by her husband is totally without support; family law has not gone very far to address that, homemakers pensions do not do anything until the woman is 65. The lack of recognized skills that women obtain in the home do not help women go out and get a job. I wonder, how do we accommodate the natural desire of women to stay in the home and the economic reality that at some point (women) will have to pay for the roof over their head, the food on the table and the clothing for their children.

A. **Kathleen Lahey:** I do not want to minimize the financial and the economic vulnerability of women who are at home, particularly in the long term, and I certainly mentioned that in my talk. I think it is very difficult to address that question. As we look towards the future, though, the kinds of patterns we are more likely to see are women who only want to be at home full time when children are young.

Coupled with the fact that women are having fewer children I think that for most women we are looking at a relatively short period of time in her overall life. And I think that although being at home will put her behind economically if you look in terms of a lifetime of earnings, pensions, seniority or possibilities of job promotion, for some women even a couple of years at home are going to make a difference. But it may still not be enough to render her incapable of earning a living after a couple of years at home. I mean, she may end up earning less overall but she can still make a living, she still may well be able to support her family.

C. **Louise Delude:** What we have accomplished in Canada is great progress for people whose marriages split up.

What we have not at all moved forward on is sharing within a marriage. A husband who has all the income does not have to give his wife even pocket money in this province, only in Manitoba is there an obligation to give pocket money to the spouse at home. As long as you feed and house minimally this is acceptable.

Now, California and other American states have an immediate community of property system. That means, for example, if the wife is at home and the husband working outside has all the income she can go and apply for a credit card on the basis of her husband's credit and will get it. This is something that has not yet been developed as an idea in Canada and I think it would be very important in solidifying the economic position of homemakers if it were to come about.

Another idea is the need for longer maternity benefits. These are benefits for homemakers which are going to cover more and more of the homemaking population in the future.

There are ways of accommodating homemakers in the system. For example, NAC's Family Policy Committee has been discussing the integration of women taking care of their own children in the home within the Family Child Care Worker System. There has been some disagreement about it because some of us, including myself, would want these homemakers to qualify and to take some emergency training, nutrition courses, and so on, to become eligible. So there are many possibilities particularly around the situation of those with young children that are being looked at now and that need to be developed.

The problem is that within groups like NAC, people on the committees are mostly concerned with the position of women in the labour force. There is nothing wrong with that, but the women who are very interested in the situation of homemakers (homemakers themselves) have not come forward enough to fight for their rights. Some have and Maureen was part of our committee this year. I think this is a promising beginning but, as I said, the situation is getting urgent so homemakers need to fight more for their rights.

C. **Kathleen Lahey:** I want to make a couple of comments. The first is to follow up on a point that Louise made that family law reform legislation is making a difference. It is and it is not. I was shocked and amazed to find out recently that although the **Murdoch** case is the case that began the whole wave of reform in family (property) law legislation, farm wives continue to be in virtually the same position economically as they were before that entire movement came into existence.

So what we may be looking at is a process in which some women, urban-based, probably middle class professional or managerial class women are getting a better share, but that may be at the expense of the invisibility of the maldistribution of family assets in other families. So I think that we should be very clear about what we take as signs of progress.

One way to answer the question that began this discussion is to point to the practices feminists over the last 15 years, how is it that so many women are able to be mothers and at the same time engage in waged work? One area of very important development is that women are becoming self-employed more and more often. They are entering into contract work of various kinds, whether it be home centred child care work of the sort that Louise is talking about or whether it be typing manuscripts for people or performing peace work, and so on.

Overall, we now know that women earn less money, their rates of profitability are lower, and that frequently, what they are doing is constructing an economic niche for themselves that they are denied in the larger more formal structured economy, but that is one direction. Other areas are part time work, forming different living units and so on. So that if you look to the practices of women who are having children and staying at home with them, you see a lot of very innovative ways to solve that problem and I suggest that feminist practice is a place to look for an answer, but there is by no means a magic solution.

C. I have a couple of comments. First of all, I am a little bit disheartened that I have heard things like "being a woman" and "being a feminist." I feel that they are one and the same and I am very proud to be both. I feel that I owe a debt of gratitude to feminists who have earned me things like the right to a pension, et cetera.

I think my life pattern is fairly typical, I have been a student, a professional; I have worked full time, I have worked part time and now I am a homemaker and I have a young child.

I like conferences such as these because they identify points of commonality among women. But the true place for these forums is with our elected government.

Another point I wanted to make is about the paid maternity leave that we get through U.I.C. I feel as a breast feeding mother that 17 weeks is not enough. I have worked for a year and a half part time expressing milk daily for my daughter. I still breast feed her, she is almost two years old. I am a full time homemaker now and I would like to continue on, but the lack of earned wages makes it difficult, though I do not feel that I should suffer because I am fulfilling my role as a mother and a woman.

C. I have really enjoyed this conference. I find that you are talking about a lot of things that are very relevant to my life. I have heard of the organizations **Mothers Are Women** and I have found the contribution that you have been making are really helpful to me. The aspect of the debate over federally funded daycare that hits me the hardest is that if the provision of federal funding is linked to both parents or, in the case of a single parent being a member of the paid work force rather than being given because it is important to support child care, then you are telling somebody like me, who has been at home for six years with my daughter, that had I done any sort of work it would have merited funding from the government. If I had gone on to Bay Street and gone through tax law for loopholes for somebody who is already up to his armpits in millions I would have been performing a task more useful to society and therefore merit funding.

I am not bound to use all kinds of chemicals because I have to do every single job in the fastest possible time. I can weed the yard. I am not forced to use all kinds of preservatives in my food because I can use fresh ingredients. I am not a burden to society in many ways, I am not using a lot of society's resources which I would need to if I was doing any old kind of job. So for that reason I really regret that the present demand for government funding of child care is presented in this form.

C. **Kathleen Lahey:** There was just one thing that I think needs to be clarified. I am not sure what the government has in mind, but women's organizations that have advocated for daycare have not suggested that you would have to be in the work force to be able to use daycare. For example, if you were unemployed you would still be able to use daycare.

C. **Louise Dulude:** It is true that the recommendations of National Action Committee and Day Care Advocacy

Association would open up child care, outside of child care services to all mothers whether or not they were at home themselves. I do, however, understand what you are saying, that you would not be getting this yourself if you took care of your own children.

And I agree! I think that we must look at this issue on two different levels. One is the principle of whether we want the mothers at home to get the same benefits.

I do not think it is useful to look at it in that way because it is not really a choice, politically, to fund everybody, we must have priorities. I do not think that women at home of all income levels should be getting an equivalent to the child care benefits given outside at this time because there is a desperate need for child care for women in the labour force. There are millions of children who are in need of proper care who are not getting it. There are just no affordable spaces available at the present time.

C. **Maureen Kellerman:** I am speaking, obviously, from a perception of women at home, I agree mostly with what Louise is saying but there are some problems with it. One is that if we say that we have to be providing government funded child care for all families as a priority before you look at the needs of women at home then you are going to be funding a fair number of two income families who are definitely going to be better off than a family where one parent is foregoing an income to be at home. So that there is a problem of inequity there. And also the level of public perception. You hear that kind of concern from women at home and I think that that prevents women at home from being as supportive of daycare as I think we should be.

The other problem is that the women's movement is divided over even the principle, let alone the priority of funding parental care. You start to ask the question of if we put it so far back on the train that it is not even on the caboose we are just leaving it behind entirely and I think we have to clarify our questions of principles as well and not just say that "Well, as a matter of priority it is not a priority so we really will not worry about hashing this one out." Because I think it is an important issue.

C. **Kathleen Lahey:** I would like to just add a couple of comments on this point. First of all, I think one issue that tends to get ignored when talking about widespread publicly funded daycare organizations is that unless we are very, very careful what we are going to be doing is allocating a significant amount of money and social resources to recreating, extending and modifying what I consider to be patriarchal social order. In other words, it is not going to be women who are owning, running or otherwise operating, deriving profits from these kinds of daycare centres. If the usual Canadian pattern of socializing these kinds of services is followed then what we are going to see is more and more tax benefits,

grants, and so on, being given to male-dominated organizations which will employ women at low wages. And I think that unless we can come to terms with the nature of the corporate state while we are talking about the structure of daycare services, then women may very well find that the kinds of problems they have been having are simply replicated but in a different form.

So for that reason I would advocate keeping on the table the possibility of giving women run groups resources that could be used whether in the home or in community based groups to organize daycare for themselves. It is absolutely true that if you give a little bit of money to women who know how to stretch money a lot further than men know how to stretch it, then you are probably going to be able to empower a larger number of women more quickly.

Now, this raises the whole question of standards, regulation, licensing and so on. These are difficult issues that women are going to have to hash out, but I would advocate being very, very cynical of the benefits of just buying into the corporate state in order to get another couple of hundred thousand slots in daycare centres for children. I think that we have to radically revise who should be in charge of design and delivery of daycare services. So I would be in favour of keeping the terms of the debate very, very wide until people can say why they should be narrowly defined.

C. **Louise Delude:** Just to clarify one point following Kathleen's comments, the reasons she has given are precisely the reasons why the positions of NAC and of the Day Care Advocacy Association are to be against the funding of commercial child care. We think that all government subsidized child care must be non-profit with an opportunity for parents to run it directly. Our studies have found that they are indeed better run, they give better care and they do not exploit their workers. And that is why we will continue to fight for that, even though in Ontario it is a very difficult battle as you may know.

Q. **The comment was made on the panel that women should be grouping themselves and making some input in regards to addressing the situation of homemakers specifically. However, Kathleen Lahey pointed out from the study in Australia that 20 minutes a week was the extent of leisure time. This gives women who are home with children very little time to group together and lobby.**

Another thing that came up from the study is the number of hours per week of work, unpaid work that is being done (90 to 100 hours per week). Does that include child care work?

My last point is, I have noticed that the men have become far more visible in child care on the streets, in the schools, et cetera. I was wondering if there are statistics to show that men in fact are doing more work

on the child care front?

A. **Kathleen Lahey:** I will start with the point relating to the work week figures. The figure of 90 to 100 hours a week is total hours worked whether the woman engages in waged work or not. So what happens when a woman goes into waged work, her total amount of home centred work usually falls, but it will not fall much below the level of, say, 50 hours a week in addition to the wage work. That is just to clarify.

Secondly, that figure does include child care, but if you want to be more realistic in counting child care work I have come to the conclusion that mothering is a 24 hour a day job. And there are women who have gone years without getting a proper night's sleep because they know that they are the one that has got to perform various mothering tasks, whether it is to get the child who has fallen out of bed back into bed or change a diaper or help a child go to the bathroom or deal with nightmares or whatever. So this is a condition of women's work which I think should be added into the equation. I tend not to include it because people start really getting impatient with my lack of realism when I demand that women should be paid 24 hours a day minimum wage at least.

The figures relating to men, I do not know. I have seen some studies that purport to demonstrate men's greater involvement in child care but what I have tended to notice -- and this on a purely sort of empirical or an anecdotal level -- is that while you see a lot of men doing what I call "wearing children in public", which tends to create the appearance of greater involvement in the whole process of parenting, quite frequently you will find that that same parent is completely detached from the child in the context of the family home. So I think that we need a lot more solid information that empiricizes the illusions that are trying to be created by things like **Kramer and Kramer** and all of that sort of mass culture stuff. I do not think that we will find that men are really doing that much work.

When should women organize? Well, I do not know. Women seem to be organizing all of the time and if the conditions of women's work can be collectivized and socialized then maybe we will have more of an opportunity to see each other. Since we can do more than one thing at a time we can organize at the same time that we are doing child care or home centred work, right.

Q. I was very interested in hearing about the Murdoch case and what she got from that case and the fact it opened the door. I am sorry to say that in my volunteer work I am experiencing many women who have gone through the law court for supposedly equitable division. In some cases their husband has removed most of the assets before they even get to court. He also has, in some instances, run up debt which at the dissolving of the marriage she is

equally responsible to have to pay for. Very often she is without any support whatsoever. There is the younger one around the corner who steps right in and sometimes she is owning half the assets before she get into the said home. A recent case was where the husband sold the house for about $10,000 less than the market value in spite.

So although we think we have progressed a great deal by the law I am sorry to say in some instances many women are far worse off than what they were before.

And, as you have said, many changes have to come about, both for the women who are at home and who do invaluable service. If we have got mothers today willing to be mothers let us consider them as being the foundation of the nation. So there are many things to be considered.

A. **Louise Delude:** You mentioned how in some respects women are worse off now than they used to be in the past and it is true. And a common fallacy, I should call it the "R.E.A.L. Women fallacy," is to look at this and to say "Well, this happened at the same time that the women's movement was developing so the women's movement must have caused this." which, of course, is ridiculous. The women's movement, as was mentioned, came up in reaction to this. We did not cause divorces to increase; we did not cause the fact that the population is aging and there are more and more widows. We are reacting against this!

C. **Kathleen Lahey:** I would like to just support Louise's statement. In looking at law, absolutely, we see lots of areas where as soon as women think they have made an advance the next thing you know it is purely illusory. This is not the fault of feminism, except to the extent, that it has created a new context within which men can use the power that they already have to take things away from women or to keep them away from them. I would describe that as male backlash against feminist progress.

Q. **Kathleen, has there been any research or studies done documenting the millions of hours of volunteer work that is done by women in the community?**

A. **Kathleen Lahey:** There have been some studies here and there. It is an area that people have not look at as systematically as they could. But the whole question of women's nurturing work, all the way from taking care of other members of the family to engaging in charitable organizations and performing community services is something that women are starting to study. The more we see the kinds of things that women do that make it possible to have this culture, the more our demands for some kind of economic equity will be taken with some respect. I think the fact that this conference is discussing this as a serious issue is a big change from, say, 10 years ago in the women's movement, it just was not being talked about 10 years ago. So that is progress.

Q. I would like to begin by thanking you, Louise, for the work you are doing on behalf of women and pensions. I appreciate having had this opportunity today to hear about it.

There is something that has been troubling me in the discussion that is going on today, however, especially when there have been attempts by all three speakers to address some of the larger problems, economic problems, if you like, that contribute to women's oppression. And in your remarks, Louise, you said that there were some difficult and peculiar developments within the women's movement; sometimes a fight for the rights of prostitutes takes precedence over the rights of homemakers.

A. **Louise Dulude:** Firstly, I just want to comment that it is not that the defence of prostitutes which takes priority, it's just that some feminists feel it is easier to defend prostitutes than homemakers because, perhaps, we feel detached from their situation, we have no problems with their situation because we see it from the outside, while homemaking is something that we still feel so confused about, so entangled with, that we would rather not deal with it. So it is not a question of one over the other.

Q. We have talked about the way language today can make us disappear when we talk about men going to work on the car and women just vacuum. And as women organize themselves and more and more form channels of expression for themselves and whatever the labels that they choose, either Status of Women or The Advisory Council on Women's Issues, one of the complaints that surfaces from men and women both, I think, is by labelling a committee, a "women's committee" it does two things. Number one, it continues the discrimination that women have experienced over the years but now it is almost reverse discrimination, women are discriminating against men.

And secondly there is the criticism that just the word "women" included somehow turns off many people and immediately people stop listening. And I have given some consideration to the problem and it seems to me that if we try to change and hide the name "women" under some other label that we are putting ourselves back into the shadow world. That term I thought was interesting.

I would just like reaction from the panel and see how that affects the kinds of names we use and the inclusion of the word "women", if it does affect negatively and how you respond to that particular item.

A. **Louise Delude:** About 15 years ago when I was working at the Canadian Advisory Council and I went to the receptionist in our building and asked her about a woman who had just come by and she said "You mean the lady." I said "What is wrong with the word 'woman'?" She said "Oh, can't use that word, it is crude." This is at the Canadian Advisory Council.

I think this would not happen today, I really do. I even notice that some washroom doors say "women" and "men" which never would you have seen 10 years ago. So I think that "women" used to be a dirty word but it is less so as we use it more and we must continue to do that.

PANEL ON: NEW PERSPECTIVES ON MOTHERHOOD

MODERATOR: Bernice Dubec

PANELISTS:

Jan Kinney. Mother of two children, a son 21 and a daughter 18. When Jan was a child she had polio. As an adult she was advised by a number of doctors not to have children. Ignoring their advice and following her maternal instinct Jan had two children. In 1973 she became a single parent. Her desire to return to school became a reality when her children were in their teens. Because of surgeries and family crises Jan had to leave school. Her future goal is to return to her studies. She is also a valuable and active member of DAWN, a lobby group for disabled women.

Janine O'Leary Cobb. Founder and publisher of **A Friend Indeed**, a national newsletter for women in menopause and mid-life. While raising her five children she attended university in the evenings and later received a scholarship to graduate school. When her youngest child started Grade 1 Janine worked full time as a Professor of Humanities and Sociology at Vanier College in Montreal. At the age of 50 she launched **A Friend Indeed** and has since been in high demand as a workshop and seminar leader all over the country. Janine's book **Understanding Menopause** was published earlier this year.

Lucie Laliberte Richardson. Founding member and National President of the Organizational Society of Military Spouses, a group of spouses of military members. She has worked as a legal researcher for both the Attorney General's Ministry and LEAF. Prior to that she worked as a legal aid caseworker in Kingston. I am sure that it comes as no surprise to learn that two years ago she returned to school to get a law degree. Lucie is the mother of five children who range in ages between 7 and 15.

Lorraine Stick. Vice-President of the Yukon Advisory Council on the Status of Women and Project Co-ordinator of the Skookum Jim Friendship Centre. Lorraine's commitment to the native community is reflected in her volunteer work, which has included The Yukon Native Justice Committee, The Youth Native Justice Committee and the Victoria Friendship Centre. Lorraine is the mother of two children.

JAN KINNEY

MOTHER

Well, as it was said, I have two children and what most people say is a disability. My attitude is that I am differently abled and there is always a way around most things -- a person can manage. My children have grown up with this attitude from the cradle.

When I was in my early 20s I went to a doctor to confirm my suspicions that I was expecting and he proceeded to inform me that I could have an abortion. You know, without saying any other alternatives, just an abortion. And as I was leaving his office he said "I will see you in two weeks" and I said "No." So I did not bother going to a doctor until I was about six months expecting. And about that time I started walking on crutches. Before that I had not used them. It was to alleviate the extra weight that I was going to have to carry around.

After I had had my son I found that it was a lot easier than I expected, you know, carrying him around in my arms. The way I walked it frightened my mother-in-law because she thought I was going to bang his head on the corner of a door frame, but fortunately the way I walked, the swing, I would be to the right when I would be before the door frame and just as I was going through a door frame I would be to the left and just after the door frame I would be to the right again. So I had it well co-ordinated even though it still left her heart in her mouth.

My son was about four when I had my daughter, and through delivery and carrying him my hip was affected and I found I could not carry her around in my arms. My son helped me out a lot in that. I would put my daughter in the lounge seat and my son would drag the lounge seat into the front room from the bedroom and then over to the table and from there I could pick her up and put her in the high chair or whatever.

At one point, I went into hospital to have surgery and came back about four months later and had to re-establish myself with my kids. And it took a couple of months to get things back on track again. Once, oh, a couple of years later, I was on my own looking after the kids and I took them places, like Niagara Falls for a day, or something like that, the museum, the Science Centre, the Exhibition. I found at the Exhibition, though, a lot of walking around and I had to get a wheel chair from St. John's. I noticed people would look (some of the people in booths, for instance) right over my head and talk to my kids as though I was not there. The kids would look at me to get any instructions, you know, of whether they could have whatever was being bought.

We discussed this and it was sort of put to rest at being able to accept that some people had a problem being able to look passed the wheel chair.

At home, I taught my kids, both of them, how to cook. They

were cooking by the time they were seven or eight years old, with supervision, and now they could almost maintain their own place when they get older. As far as looking at things that maybe cannot be done, I've learned to be patient and eventually a way will be found to do things. Sometimes, well, they had to -- they picked up on being patient with people. You know it really is just an inconvenience, that is all.

One day my daughter she came home and she was really upset. The kids were teasing her and calling her a crippled person. Eventually she got them to come over after school and they found we were all just normal people. And the others that could not accept, she came to understand, you cannot please everybody all the time.

When my son reached Grade 7 he was starting to do math like 3Y = 6 and that was great to me. I could not understand it. I had only gone as far as Grade 8. And I decided then to go back to school. After about, oh, three months I was teaching the new math to him.

When my kids would bring their friends home, they had no problem in asking me "What happened to you?" and I would explain a simplified form of saying I had weak legs and they would accept that.

In 1983 I went back into the hospital to have hip surgery. After that I was astonished at the number of places that were inaccessible. My bank was one. Even one little step up can make a big difference when you are in a wheel chair, even if it is only for three months. And in the building where I live, from the first floor to the sixth there is an elevator, but to get to the first floor there are some stairs. But we managed to go out a few times with my crutches and the railing and getting down the stairs without putting weight on my leg and then I would get into the wheelchair again after my son had taken the wheel chair down the stairs.

Well, I had planned to go back to school to finish off my diploma and high school credits. Right now I have been just taking it easy and doing some volunteer work as a member of DAWN. And for my kids, they accept it all. I am just their mother.

Thank you.

JANINE O'LEARY COBB

Founder and Publisher
A Friend Indeed

Based on the draft program that was sent to me I prepared a text on older mothers and when I got here I found out that I was down to talk about the Empty Nest Syndrome, a syndrome which, by the way, I regard as almost totally a fiction. So what I am going to do is talk about older mothers but preface it with a few words about the empty nest.

First of all, a syndrome is considered to be a constellation of recognizable symptoms, so using the words "Empty Nest Syndrome" tends to pathologize a very common period of transition in a woman's life. It implies that motherhood is the sum total of a woman's being and I reject that. It implies that the children leave for good, which we all know just does not happen nowadays. They come and go, depending on their education, their travels, the state of their marriages, et cetera, so there are very few of us who actually have an empty nest.

I think it also labels and labels in a very pejorative fashion a time of hesitation, indecision, a time when a woman needs to gather her forces together to decide what she is going to do with the rest of her life. And the phrase "Empty Nest" has been exploited terribly by pharmaceutical companies to suggest tranquilizers for mid-life and menopausal women, by commodity manufacturers, furniture dealers and fashion manufacturers to offer some sort of superficial distraction for women when their children leave. And I think it suggest to women that they are abnormal if they continue to cook meals for four or five when there are only two, or maybe even one, in the household, something that I think we all go through.

It is also occasionally trotted out by doctors to explain fatigue and mild depression, which is probably more to do with an imbalance of hormones, a temporary state due to menopause rather than Empty Nest.

And this is not to say we do not miss our children. We do. Some mothers miss them more than others and some of us miss certain children more than other children. But it is frequent visits we want, not a full nest, and I think most of us have a whole list of projects waiting in the wings for when the children go.

So that is all I want to say about the so-called Empty Nest Syndrome and I will get on with what I prepared.

Obviously the topic "Older Mothers" was a very broad one which gave me a lot of leeway, and I recognize that older mothers can be disabled, native people, military wives, can be almost any age. My mother thinks it is ridiculous that I should be talking about older mothers. So what I am going to do is try to speak for a very small segment of the population, the kind of population that I am seen to represent, very middle class,

very middle income, very middle of the road, not because I do not feel that one should not try to put themselves in another's shoes -- I think we spend a lot of our time, certainly I have, saying to my children "Put yourself in someone else's shoes" and to my students also. But I think it also implies that some older mothers cannot speak for themselves.

So what I am going to do is try to focus on two particular questions: How is motherhood different in the '80s than it was in the late '50s and early '60s when I first experienced it; and what kinds of things have we learned from being mothers, something that I think is often ignored, particularly in sociology which is my field. There is a lot of information about babies socializing mothers in terms of changing their sleep patterns, their eating patterns, their holiday patterns, et cetera, but very little said about the ongoing socialization of motherhood, how children really teach us another way of looking at the world.

Some things, of course, never change. You have a page on momisms that came with your kit and it stresses that marvelous phenomenon of hearing yourself saying things that your mother said to you in exactly the same tone of voice, one of the eeriest sensations, I think, about becoming a new mother.

For women who have had ideal mothers I think this is just fine. For women who do not like the way they were brought up it means starting over from scratch -- a very difficult proposition. For most of us it means picking and choosing to treat our children in certain ways that our mothers treated us.

I think there has been a big change in the fact that young women today swear off alcohol, cigarettes and most medications, sometimes all medications, during their pregnancy, sometimes even before their pregnancy. There is not doubt that this has established benefits for the baby, but I sometimes wonder whether it does not just reinforce the kind of guilt that mothers feel. We have all felt guilty right from the beginning. Nowadays young mothers can feel guilty even before the baby is born because if they have a colicky child or a scrawny child they look at something that they might have done during pregnancy and I think that that is an enormous change and I am sort of glad, in a way, that I had my babies when I did.

Another major change that I see is that stretched terry cloth had not been invented when my babies were born and I feel that we were very much deprived!

It seems strange to remember that in the late '50s and early '60s most of us had barely heard of child abuse and I was really glad that Bernice Martin mentioned the idea of control and power, which incidentally I think has something to do with some mothers' feelings of dismay when the children leave, the loss of control, the loss of power. We are so used to focussing nowadays on the negative manifestation of that in terms of abuse that we often do not look at the sense of control and power that as mothers we have over our children.

When I was a young mother the only thing we talked about was whether to spank or not to spank and most of us decided that issue not on the basis of child psychology but on the basis of logic. I know for me it was the day when I found myself swatting my four year old son and saying "That will teach you not to hit your little sister." But I realize that something was terribly wrong.

On the other hand I think that our children probably got swatted more than children do nowadays, not in a nasty kind of way, but certainly I found when I had three very -- well, I had three under three. The oldest was two and a half when the third was born. I found there were certain times when I swatted them just to clear the air because it made me feel better and I did not go around gritting my teeth for the next hour.

I think that a demanding or obstreperous child can teach us the fine line between a quick swat on the bum and real child abuse and I think if we are honest most older mothers will acknowledge the discovery of the deep wells of rage that you did not know were in you when you are dealing with a small child. We found that there is a potential abuser in each of us and I think we learn compassion for the mother who steps over that invisible line. I think this is an understanding that comes only with motherhood.

Sending a child for time out in his or her room was a new concept to me in the early '60s and even allowing the child to have that room as a sanctuary. Rather than picking up after them, knocking when you wanted to go in was also something new to me. My mother had treated the whole house as hers, as it essentially is, and walked in uninvited. But I sometimes wonder if that has got something to do with my relationship with my kids nowadays.

Something that older mothers talk about a great deal is the expectation that if their grown children want to drop in they can drop in anytime and that you are supposed to put everything aside for them. I think this is one of the continuing areas that has to be resolved. Older mothers are afraid that if they say "Would you please call?" or "Would you please let me know that you are coming over?" that the children will just take umbrage and not come at all. So they do put everything aside and never say anything, but I hear a lot of complaining about it and I am very glad that my kids call first or write first to say they are coming.

Discipline is always a difficult part of mothering. Mothers learn usually the hard way not to box children into a corner. I do not know how many of you have said to your kids "You cannot leave the table until you finish" whatever such and such is. If you have kids like mine you end up hanging around the kitchen for three hours and then finally leaving the room so that they can stuff their pockets or put it in the garbage, or whatever they are going to do with it, so that both of you can save face. But I think that is one thing that motherhood really teaches you is not to make idle threats because you know that if you do, and do not carry them out you are going

to be sorry. And if you do, and you have to carry them out, you are going to be sorrier still.

I think too that if you make those kinds of threats to children they do not learn to make choices and that is one of the things that we as older mothers notice is this proliferation of choice. It is hard to allow children great latitude on what they wear or who they choose for friends, what they read, what they watch on television, et cetera, and obviously there have to be some rules. But I think that sometimes restricting those choices is often more beneficial to the mother than to the child. If you diminish the choices the child has he or she does not learn how to make choices.

As a college teacher I saw far too many students who were absolutely immobilized by the choices that they had to make because they had no practice in making decisions, they had no practice in making bad decisions. And one of the things that I noticed over and over again was that if they signed up for a course which they did not like or did not do well in they thought of it as a waste of a semester, a complete waste of time. They had no concept that by taking a course they had at least found out that they did not like that particular subject. They had eliminated from the choices that they would make in future, and I think that was because they had not the practice of making bad decisions at a younger age. The students I was teaching were 18, 19.

And I think that this is a continuing problem because, of course, there are more and more choices nowadays for youngsters and mothers nowadays have to deal with that in the same way that we had more choices than our mothers had.

In the '60s missing children were always runaways and usually teenagers and I think our small children had a lot more latitude in terms of roaming the streets. I know that all my children walked themselves to and from school from the age of five, and that was eight or ten blocks and across a major intersection. Nowadays it is a rare mother, and probably an unwise mother, who allows a small child this much independence.

But I think something you have to learn as mothers is that it is sometimes necessary to take chances with some of your children. If you have the kind of open, trusting child who spontaneously befriends the new child in the neighborhood or in the class you sometimes have to learn to hope that the guardian angel never sleeps, because if you really inform the child about the dangers you are, at the same time, stifling a very important part of his or her personality.

I think too that I have learned from my children something about taking chances that way, learning to speak to strangers and to watch out for new people in the neighborhood, on the faculty, in the office, and I think because children have that kind of insight in terms of people who need help that we as mothers can learn from them.

I think another thing we can learn from our children is to pay less attention to what people think. What people think was

the model that my mother should have had embroidered on a sampler on the wall. And when my oldest child, a boy, first used the "F" word, calling his younger brother an "F-ing bastard" I said to him "Larry, we do not use words like that. People will think you do not come from a nice home and we do not want to hear it." "O.K., Mom" he said "that is fine." and I thought "What a great mother I am." So his younger brother, 19 months younger, of course, picked up the word and three days later used it and I said "Peter, we do not use words like that." Blah, blah, the same thing. And Peter looked me straight in the eye and said "I know I come from a nice home and you know I come from a nice home, what do you care what people think." So I said "Well, would you do me a favour and not say it in front of me." And he said "Why didn't you say that in the first place?" That was the beginning of my looking at things in terms of my own self-respect, my own ideas of right or wrong and forgetting a little about what the neighbors might think.

I think another thing that children learn, and it is a painful lesson for you, is that the furniture and furnishing which you have so lovingly chosen are really a backdrop, a stage set waiting for the principle players. When they (the children) arrive they have no concept about what is valuable or not valuable, but whether it is useful or not. And real living and usefulness for a child involves breaking, tearing, dropping, jumping from the chesterfield onto the antique rocker, et cetera, et cetera.

I think, perhaps, something that teaches us as mothers is, not to be quite so materialistic. We also learn, of course, to hide the things that are valuable to us!

Many of us older mothers lived part of our lives working inside the home and taking care of the children and part of our lives working outside of the home. I have some children that benefitted from full time mothering, whatever that means. (I suspect if you are full time you spend most of your time actually doing housework (and very little in child care) and I think this has been pretty well demonstrated. Only my younger two children have had a mother who was working full time. I cannot see that there is any great difference between the two sets of kids myself. I think that they are alike in that they are great manipulators and that if you allow yourself to feel guilty about it they are going to use it as best they can.

I think as older mothers we have learned that feeling guilty is far more useful to the child than it is to the mother. And I have also learned, perhaps the hard way, that you cannot go on feeling guilty if you just ignore it. The feelings disappear in time. There are many times when I have felt guilty about certain things but I have just ignored it and after a while I realize I do not feel guilty about that anymore.

I should tell you too about the one time when I turned up unexpectedly for lunch. This was the first year that my kids did not have someone to prepare lunch for them and the two younger ones were about eight and seven and I thought, I will

go home and surprise them. A class had been cancelled unexpectedly and I went home and I made soup and grilled cheese sandwiches and when they got home it turned out they did not want soup, they did not want grilled cheese sandwiches and finally my daughter said to me "I do not want to hurt your feelings, mom, but this is the time when Adam and I have a chance to talk to each other so if you have work to do in the den..." So I got back in the car and went back to the college.

As children get older we try to reason with them. In the '60s we had what were called family councils where we tried to teach them how to communicate and how to make decisions. This was supposed to be an exercise in democracy but we found that with five kids it required that the parents each have three votes, and that stemmed from the day when the kids got together and voted that we sell the house and move to the suburbs.

As older mothers too we have learned that there is another side to communication. It is communication when your 13 year old daughter looks you in the eye and says "I hate you, I hate the way you look, I hate the way you walk, I hate the way you talk, I hate everything you stand for." and you have to stand there and take it.

It is communication when you overhear a 14 year old son negotiating for a nickel bag of hash on the telephone. That time I said "I'm not so naive as to think that you are not going to experiment with drugs, but you owe us $10 against your last allowance and you really cannot afford it." And we had a little discussion. He said that was true, he would phone back and cancel the order and he finished the conversation by saying "Whatever gave you the idea I am experimenting?"

It is also communication when your 16 year old daughter tells you that she intends to have sex with the guy who was voted in as hunk of her high school and that she is doing it for curiosity, not for any other reason, and that she is going to tell you all about it. And she did. I mean, I laugh about it now. At the time I said to her -- after she had told me I said "Did you enjoy it?" and she burst into tears and said "No, and you are the first person who hasn't asked me if I protected myself." And, of course, that was the first question that came to my mind, but I thought I am not going to insult her dignity by asking.

What I am trying to say to you is that kind of communication everyone thinks is marvelous. I felt as if I had been kicked in the stomach and I thought I was just going to double up in pain. So that older mothers learn, I think, to listen, to be grateful that they are talking to you, but on the other hand to at times wistfully wonder about the good old days when all these things happened and we did not have to know about it.

I think one message that children clearly send is "I can do it on my own. I can do it by myself." and this is a message that must be attended to. As a young mother I think I was very arrogant in assuming that I would know when they were ready to

take another step. It does not work that way. Children know when they are ready to take another step. Sometimes they are really not ready but what they are saying is "I am ready to be tested so you have to let me go, you have to support me, you have to allow me to do this." I think each small step they take is a dismantling of the mother as totally involved so that the mother can become a smiling bystander and someone who views herself as an independent person doing her own thing and thinking sometimes about her children but not being as involved as when they were small.

I am sure that a lot of you remember the Ann Landers or Dear Abby column that appeared not long ago where they posed the question "Are you glad you had children?" and the vast majority of responses said "No, they were sorry that they had ever had children." Aside from the fact that this was, as we sociologists say, a very unrepresentative sample, it was interesting to look at the expectations of the parents.

As mothers I think we have the unrealistic notion that we should be able to look at our grown children and feel satisfaction, accomplishment and most of all a strong sense of involvement in how they got to be the way they are. I think perhaps this idea of a job well done has and had some validity in traditional societies where children grow up to assume the roles that their parents had, but in this society where there are, as I said before, so many choices, so many branches to every path, it is hard to feel implicated in the lives of our grown children.

I have a 25 year old daughter who is now a prison guard and, in fact, was just about to go on duty at the maximum security prison where they had the break out the day before yesterday. I do not feel involved in Julie's decision. She had a degree in psychology and I thought she was going to teach emotionally disturbed children. She decides that she wants to go into criminology and this is where she decides that she wants to do it. So I cannot do anything but be as supportive as I can and hope that nothing happens to her.

I feel about her and about her brothers and her sister what I think most older mothers feel about their grown children. Surprise. Downright surprise that they turned out the way they did no matter how they turned out. And I think tempering that surprise is a reawakened respect for the genetic code. In the '60s we believed in environment and nurturing and now I think we are paying a lot more attention, perhaps grudgingly, to the power of the genes.

The memories I have of my children when they were small are not at all the memories they have. Comparing my remembrances of each of them when they were 5, or 10 or 15 with their own recollections is like two parallel narratives. They meet at certain points. But the things that I thought that I had given them that were so memorable, birthday parties or special gifts, are not at all what they remember, although they have very warm memories of other things that completely escape my memory.

My grown children are the young adults I know best. Caroline Heilbrun writing under the pen name of Amanda Cross talks about an older mother who treasures "her grown children because they are the friends to whom she does not have to explain her past." I think that is a very powerful and moving description of an older mother's relationship to her children.

As older mothers we have seen changes, some major, some minor and we look at our children with bemusement. In the last analysis we can say, as mothers say everywhere, "We did the best we could."

Thank you.

LUCIE RICHARDSON

Founding Member and National President
Organizational Society of Military Spouses

I would first of all like to thank Janine. That was wonderful, a lot of the things that have happened to me as the mother of five children. With the oldest being 15 I guess I have some things to look forward to as well! And so in a lot of ways being a mother in the military, or on a military base, is similar to being a mother anywhere. What I want to talk a little bit about are more of the differences.

When I originally, myself and about five others, decided that we needed a national support group for spouses of military members, one of the very first comments made by a military officer to us as we tried to organize a dental plan and get a traffic light put in by petition was that "If the military had wanted a soldier to have a wife they would have issued him one." And as I took that in he went on to say "In fact, they have issued him one." and he showed me a sewing kit that they called the "housewife." I was not terribly impressed and he thought it was quite humorous.

Another officer told us that we should go back to our soaps and yet another told us that a bunch of screaming housewives would never accomplish anything. I would like to say that instead of a traffic light there now is an overpass and we have a dental plan for spouses of military members and their families. So I think a lot of the people were wrong on a lot of counts, but there are still a lot of things yet to be done.

I also want to clarify that today I am speaking as an individual, an individual who has confronted the military institution in a way that few spouses have and that my views, the methods of our group and myself, and sometimes my analysis, is not shared by all spouses, although I feel confident in saying that most would not disagree with the descriptions and the problems that I will put forth today. And so I really want to speak in this analysis as myself.

Military spouses have been socialized to believe that the military takes care of its own, that our problems are private and that they should be dealt with internally. That means it should be kept all in the military family. And I think most of us know what these attitudes have traditionally meant for women.

Many people, and I think most people have never lived on a military base and so what I would like to do is give you a brief description of what it is like to live in PMQs, permanent married quarters. These are going to be applicable specifically to women who are actually in the confines of a military base, although some of these will apply to women who are spouses of military members who live off base.

I would also like to say that I am going to refer to military members as men because it is more simple and it reflects mostly the reality. There are about 8,000 or 9,000 women now

in the military. And wives are called dependents, although the term used is "dependant wives", or "DWs" in military acronyms. Although there are now a few dependant husbands they reacted against being called "dependant wives". That was the only term that was in the books. So we are now sometimes called spouses or sometimes just "dependents."

A military base has an operational side and it has a residential side where the members and their families live. The residential side usually has two churches, a Protestant and a Catholic Church. It usually has schools, mostly elementary. It has what is called the Canex which is a small department store, a convenience store, sometimes a barber shop and a hairdressing salon, so it would be like a small mall. There are recreation facilities and most things that you would find in a small subdivision. There are single quarters or barracks that are physically separate from where the married people live. Sometimes these are on the operational side or closer to the operational side.

The difference from a subdivision is that here there is a person in charge who is called the Base Commander. He has final authority over everything, from the length of the grass on the lawns to the appointment of the school board members as well as the Chairman. And I say "Chairman" because I have yet to see a Chairman who was a women, because the person who is appointed, especially on a big base, has to be a Major and above and there are very few women who are Majors and above. I have yet to see a woman who was a spouse of a military member be appointed the Chairman, although I have served as a member of a school board.

I might say about that that when I went to the meeting the Chairman said that when we saw the minutes not to be surprised if we saw our names written down as the person who had seconded or brought forth the motion because it was really a farce. None of that actually occurred. It was all written up that way in the minutes.

One of the other things that originally started the group was that the Base Commander told us that a spouse could not be the Mayor of our community, and it was one of the things that started the group going. Since then the Base Commander has appointed a woman at the base I was at to be the Mayor of the Community Council. He chose a Lieutenant-Colonel's wife that he was quite secure of.

Now, the thing to know about a base then is that the Base Commander pretty well runs everything that goes on on the base. One Base Commander -- this is going back maybe five or six years -- issued a memo forbidding women to put the garbage out in their housecoats. Another Base Commander would not allow direct sales, women who were engaged in direct sales on the base. So that meant a woman could not sell Tupperware. As recently as two or three years ago a Base Commander in Calgary had determined you have to apply for a licence if you want to sell these things. She was selling one brand of cosmetics and because there was already somebody selling another brand she was not allowed to do that. So he has far reaching impact on our lives.

We lobbied very hard to have a resource centre for women put in in Penhold. Originally the Base Commander would not allow birth control information to be put into the resource centre and that has been changed after an outcry in the House of Commons over that issue.

The other thing to understand about Base Commanders is that they are normally replaced every two years and their control and command is quite arbitrary and so the functioning on the base and what happens changes quite rapidly. When you combine this with the fact that there is a turn over of approximately one-third of the personnel every year, that means that if you live on a base for four years you are not going to know very many people from the first year that you got there. And I know that we live in a transient society but the military lifestyle is even more so and so our communities are smashed every three years if you are living in married quarters.

I would also like to clarify that military families pay rent for the homes that we live in at rates that are set by CMHC and they are comparable to what people pay on the outside, although in certain areas of high cost there is an allowance made for that.

I would also like, before I go into what it is like being a mother on a military base, to give you a bit of an idea of what is called the "military mind" or the "military ethos" and how it applies to women.

I do not suppose it is a big surprise to find out that the military is conservative and tradition bound or that it is anti-democratic and authoritarian, which is fine for what they need to do to maintain control and have disciplined armed forces and protection for our country. But when a Base Commander has the kind of control he does over families living on the base that can sometimes begin to pose problems.
The military fosters male bonding, especially in what is considered the primary combat unit of five to six men, and again I use the word "men" intentionally. There are now trials to allow women into combat, but the basic argument against women in combat is this very thing: that five or six men are the basic unit of combat. The ethos stresses duty and obligations as paramount to any rights. Military members are on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Duty to country and the military must always take precedence over any other personal needs, including those of the family. The theory is that anything that disrupts the bonding of this unit of five or six men will undermine operational effectiveness and national security.

And then we look at the types of things that would disrupt the bonding of the primary unit. These are common law marriages, family pressures, homosexuality, politics, religious discussions, involvement in community decision-making, to name a few. So if you look at a military community that is on Department of National Defence property, officially you are not going to find people there who live common law; you are not going to find homosexuals; you are not going to find a military member who is disabled; you are not going to find people who are older or of minority culture. You are going

to find a place where at least one person in the family unit is employed. So unemployment, at least of the military member, is non-existent, although the unemployment rate for spouses of military members -- I am giving you a U.S. statistic because we do not know what it is in Canada -- is three times what the unemployment rate is for other people. And so for raising children it is a very artificial environment as compared to what a person would find living out on what we call "Civvy Street" or living on the economy.

Obedience and discipline are catch words and are maintained through a system of privileges and punishments. This is particularly important to women who live in PMQs because libraries, a house, recreational facilities, schools and even a pay cheque are considered to be privileges. And so if people do not behave these types of privileges can be removed.

When we first organized to try and start the group the Base Commander reminded us that he could ask us to leave our married quarter within 30 days. He said it in a very nice way, but the message was clear about the privileges that were available to us. If children disobey in the recreation area then the recreation area can be barred to all the children. When I questioned the Mayor of the Community Council in Calgary as to why no children under 12 were allowed to use the swimming pool he said it was because the military and the recreation people were not babysitters. This at a time when most of the men were away for three months. And so privileges are important to military discipline and being able to control what happens on the Department of National Defence policy.

So in ideal situations militaries are made up of single males. But after the Second World War when we decided that we needed a standing army and we wanted an all volunteer force with career-minded individuals the military realized that they had to have families or they would not be able to recruit men into the military. That posed serious contradictions for the military. If you need people for 20 years you could no longer ask them to remain single. Families became necessary evils. They are still regarded to a large extent as a burden and, indeed, a welfare burden on the military that detracts from the money that they have to spend on equipment and pay for military members.

And so traditionally women and families have posed problems for military commanders because they have always been needed as settlers, as camp followers, as prostitutes, as providing a lot of services that the military did not pay for. But although they were needed they have always had to be controlled and manipulated to the needs of the military.

But the military relies on the stereotypes of men and women from back in the '50s to maintain an all volunteer force and to maintain their control over families. And so we have the stereotype of the macho soldier and we have the "dependant wife", which jokingly in military slang is often spoken of as DW's or "dumb women."

In fact, however, military soldiers are probably the most dependant men in the world. When they go out on maneuvers

there is a term that is used to refer to their needs: "three hots (meaning meals) and a cot". And so every need they have is taken care of. When they are sent away for three months they have no family responsibilities and they are totally dependant on the military for absolutely every need they have. When that happens, the dependant wife in fact, except in economic terms, is the totally independent one. And in the 1980s the military tried to use that and tried to appropriate feminist vocabulary to show how liberated women spouses really are.

The military portrays itself thus as the guardian of the nuclear family. And so in order to keep up its transient system and rapid mobilization it requires women who are in supportive roles and who keep the home fires burning.

So I guess what this means to women as women first before women as mothers that it is very difficult for women to find employment and to keep employment, for instance, and to build security in jobs. We have been told here at this conference that 71 per cent of families are double income families. If you look at the rank structure of the military there are some very low income people who can be classified as the working poor. I know of families who have to use food banks and there are families in the military who qualify for social assistance as well and so there is a strong requirement for women to have employment.

But in a job women cannot build up seniority. It is very difficult to have a career when you are being posted every three or four years. There is no way of building up your own pension credits and economic security. It is also hard to get an education. For at least 15 years of my 20 years of marriage I did not live anywhere near a university so that I could upgrade my education. I did some of it by correspondence. But that is a very difficult thing to do when you have small children at home, to be able to get your education by correspondence.

And so the military has many methods of being able to control what happens within the family, and that is all done for the good of the military profession to ensure that they can maintain recruitment. And a lot of recruitment is done from within military families as well. The children are socialized into that kind of a lifestyle. I guess that came home most clearly to me one time when my two youngest daughters were about four and three and we were living in Alberta. In order to collect our mail we had to go from the residential side of the base to another area of the base where the recreation centre was and where the mail was. There was an exercise going on on the base at that time and we had to go right passed an area that had been barb-wired. And my two little girls and I had machine guns pointed at us by men in combats and these two girls did not bat an eyelash. I found it incredible. At that time it really brought home starkly to me the contradictions in raising children in the military, and, as a feminist, wanting peace.

What happens then for women is that the traditional isolation in being a homemaker is exacerbated in this type of a

situation. Women live in isolated stations. One place I lived at was called Moisie in Northern Quebec. It was a 10 hour drive north of Quebec City. Very, very isolated. Even in a place like Kingston where we are only just a 10 or 15 minute drive from the municipality, people who live on base, because everything is there, because the schools are there, the churches are there, everything is there, turn inward and become isolated from the local communities as well.

Our provincial representatives look upon us as a federal responsibility and the federal people look upon us as a military responsibility, and the military look upon us as a welfare burden. And so we become isolated in all respects from all areas of government as well.

We also become isolated from feminists, not only because of the innate conservative nature of the military and probably a lot of men and women who are in the military, but also because of feminist hostility in general to all things military. And so even that support system sometimes is barred to women who are spouses of military members.

So spouses of military members face all of the concerns that feminists have mentioned here at this conference as mothers and as women, and they also have the added isolation and direct military control over their lives and homes.

It is a constant struggle in this kind of environment where our communities are being smashed to provide continuity and security for self and children. Although it is not obligatory that we live in PMQ's often the choice is limited because there are not enough accommodations, even in a place as large as Kingston, for all of the military families who move in.

The other thing is that the physical surroundings, because all the married quarters were built in the '50s and '60s at the same time are basically similar everywhere. For our children, because of the frequent moves, it becomes important for them to move to a place that looks physically like the other place that they lived at and that the school looks the same. I remember on our last move my son asked me for a bedroom with his bed and the curtains and everything back exactly the same way it was. And so there is a certain amount of pressure, economically and emotionally to continue to live in the married quarters.

It is also beneficial to the military to have us on base since if women are able to work and make more money than their husbands and families can afford their own homes it becomes difficult to retain people in the military.

And there is more. There are studies that show that an inability of children to form long term relationships. There is depression, alcoholism, drug addiction and child abuse, the same as anyplace else. Some studies in the U.S. have shown that in fact it is higher. What is important is that these issues be addressed. They are starting to be addressed by the military officials and there are some progressive leaders who want to see these changes. But because of the innate conservatism of the military and because of the high priority

on national security, on getting money for nuclear submarines and all the things that really matter to military commanders, families and mothering and children often fall to the bottom of the list.

And so a group like OSSOMM is looked on with a lot of apprehension by military leaders. There have been some changes in the regulations lately. The military is looking at setting up its own national support system for spouses of military members, under the control of the Base Commanders again, so that they can ensure that self-sacrifice continues to be the norm and that military families indeed do belong to them. I think they are going to find it more and more difficult to be imposing things from the top on women and families and they are going to find that more and more women want to have a say. They want to be involved in the decision-making that goes on in their lives and in the lives of their children.

Thank you.

LORRAINE STICK

Vice-President,
Yukon Advisory Council on the Status of Women
Project Co-ordinator,
Skookum Jim Friendship Centre

Thank you.

In this presentation I will be sharing with you a history of our cultural practice as it has been practiced and currently as a rediscovery and revival of our spiritual roots.

My research consists of interviewing various people living in the Yukon, some of whom have had their traditional roots in B.C. and Ontario. Although there are some different customs practiced throughout our nations there are also some similar customs, which will be self-evident in the context of this speech.

Throughout our nations the roots of traditional practice of child bearing and child rearing are common in the sense of ensuring safe and healthy births. In tradition, from the time the woman is with child she is cared for. This is practiced by assigning a wet mother to assist and make sure that the right food is taken and that stress is not encountered as it plays a big factor in the health of the mother. It was believed that if the mother would encounter any stress during her pregnancy it would affect the mental state of the child after the child was born. They honestly believed that. I think if you are going through a troubled time during your pregnancy you will find that your child might be experiencing some trouble after birth and in growing up in this society.

Foods that pregnant women can eat are moose meat boiled very soft with the bones. This provides calcium. Also fish bone, like salmon, would provide calcium. Wild berries of many kinds provide vitamins, especially vitamin C. A portion of sap, sap meaning from the trees, in particular spruce trees. I am not too sure what type of trees you have down here, but taking the outer part off the tree and then just taking the sap off from the inside of the tree is what we eat. I remember even eating that when I was a child growing up. Roots as well. Moose intestines provided minerals. The liver and the stomach of the moose, or any wild animal, I guess, would provide iron.

Foods pregnant women cannot eat. The following foods are considered sacred and would only be eaten by certain people at particular times, therefore these foods would be avoided by the pregnant mother: bear meat, porcupine meat, calf meat, baby rabbit -- actually any baby animal of any kind would be avoided by a pregnant mother -- and fish cheeks.

The baby's diet is restricted to certain foods and greasy food is not given to the child.

Child rearing is very important to the family structure. Having many children means a better survival and makes for a

stronger family. And what that means is that having a big family the oldest child was taught the roles of a parent, I guess, since the child is very small. Example, myself. I was the oldest in my family. I was taught how to fetch water, how to cook, how to cut wood. I had to help my mother with all the things around the house. In turn I had to teach my brothers -- I have three younger brothers -- those roles and assist my mother so that my mother could do other things around the house, like doing beadwork or tanning hides, or whatever it is that she needed to do.

So the aunts, uncles, mothers and grandparents help ensure that the pregnant mother receive proper care. This is a form of community help.

Parenting starts within the womb using the belly button as a telephone. It is believed that a child within the womb can perceive and hear what is said by other people as well as the mother.

There is a legend which says that by using a fish bone one can communicate to the baby in the womb. The words spoken can flow through the bone to be transmitted to the child and will remain with the child.

It is also believed that the eggs and sperm are within the child and established for the birth of their children in the future.

If there is a death in the family the mother to be is not allowed to attend the funeral as a precautionary measure to protect the unborn child. The stress might be too much for the mother.

The women are encouraged not to complain of the pain they endure through their labour. If there are any complaints then it was believed to further pain. Also if the women anticipate any severe pain they would ask the help of the medicine man before the birth date.

The women are taught to bear down during labour pain and this is done by drawing themselves together and pushing down with their breath and entire body. Also the women are encouraged to sit up until the baby is ready to emerge. This method is very easy as opposed to laying down. Example, we do not lay down to go to the bathroom, right, common sense. So we believe that traditionally many years ago when women were out hunting or moving camp, if they were pregnant and were ready to give birth to their child they would just squat where they were and they would just give birth to the child. They would then just go on with the journey. It was not a big problem for them. There was no pain, or they did not seem to encounter any difficulties. And it was quite interesting at lunch time I met a woman here who said she was thinking of having her birth in that method, so I was quite pleased to hear that.

When the baby is born the cord and placenta are treated with respect and buried. The mother will always talk to the baby very softly and rock the baby.

There is a certain power or energy which comes with birth. If it is a girl the baby is rubbed down with porcupine. You will probably think, oh, quills of the porcupine. Actually it is not with the quills of the porcupine, but the skin of the porcupine inside. The skin is rubbed on the baby. This ensures that when she is an adult her birthing experience will happen easily.

If it is a boy child then a bow and arrow is tied to the cradle. This ensures that the child will grow up to be a good hunter. If the family is out in the bush the father assists with the delivery of the baby.

Moss was used as the equivalent of disposable diapers. Many years ago we never had disposable diapers or we never used cloth. I do not know if you have ever seen those carrying cradles Tiginaugans they are called. Within the Tiginaugans they never used diapers, they used to pad it with moss. It was fairly easy when the baby would go to the bathroom it was easy to just remove the moss and put fresh moss in.

From this time on the extended family helps care for the children and the community assists also with the rights and responsibility of raising a child. The child is respected and is never belittled. They are treated as human beings from the time of birth.

The child rearing responsibilities are shared amongst the aunts, uncles, grandparents as well as the parents. Example, the aunts and uncles might take the child or children during the day or for a period of time or the child or children might stay with them when they reach a certain age. And I would just like to expand a little bit more about that. In the community if your child was outside playing you need not worry about your child being hurt in any way because the community took on that responsibility of looking after all the children within the community. If it comes to lunch time and if your child did not return home it was not a big worry because you knew that your child would be fed somewhere within the community. So you can see that it was a shared responsibility and this sense of harmony was there in the community.

If a girl has an early pregnancy, in the teen years, the child is placed with an adult to help take care of the child in order to allow the young mother to still be involved with her learning and growing activities.

Emotional feelings are expressed through hugs, love and deep caring.

A knee bone from the moose is used as a soother for the baby. When there is a kill the women take the sticky substance between the hide and the flesh and rub this on the baby's face or hands. This will keep the baby occupied for hours while the mother continues skinning the moose.

If children are abandoned, neglected or abused the immediate family will take the child or children and care for them until it is felt that the parents are ready to have them back. Parents are never put down or judged by their actions,

example, like drinking or whatever it is that may be happening. In the meantime the parents are confronted by the family or Chief and Council and the necessary action is put in place.

This method of adoption is traditional and therefore it is accepted within the lifestyle of many communities. Also the children always know who their birth mother is and visiting is always encouraged.

Yesterday we were talking about infertility. If a couple were having problems conceiving children, someone in the extended family, if they had many children let this other couple take two or three of their children. It was looked on as an easy way to share the responsibility and not a solution to infertility. So a couple, if they were having problems giving birth or having problems having children it would not be seen as a big problem. They would simply share children.

Because of the strong spiritual bond between a mother and child the children will go wherever the mother goes. In this fashion the children practice in all activities. They are never regarded as a burden.

The child is given its Indian name after a decision is made, and this is based on their character. They might obtain two or three names by the time they reach adulthood, a name at birth, a name at adolescence, and a name when they become adult.

The family appoints one of the children to care for their grandparents. This job is shared with their cousins or with other children within the community. So there you can see again that that sharing of responsibility, the community, even young children were given that responsibility to care for their elders because in our community elders are looked upon as very well respected people. They are our wisdom. They are our knowledge. So we make sure that they are well cared for and well provided because they are our teachers.

It is very important for children to have a father. If a father dies one of his brothers will assume the duties of the father. The brother becomes celibate and acts as a guardian in the family relationship.

Within the extended family a father is responsible for his nephew and niece and, of course, his own sons. The uncle in turn is responsible for his brother's sons and daughters.

Teaching starts early in life and the male child is taken from the home at a certain age. During the time he is away from home the boy is taught skills which will prepare him to be a good hunter when he becomes a man.

Discipline and responsibilities are taught partially through story telling. And I remember when I was a young child my mother and my grandmother used to tell stories, many stories, and I used to look forward to those stories all the time. It was their form of telling us what was right and wrong. We were never told this was right or this was wrong. We were

never told this was bad, this was good. It was just their way of teaching us. It was just through these stories we become good listeners. We believe that in becoming a good listener we can hear everything around us.

The father also shared some of the responsibilities when it comes to disciplining and when the mother has things to do outside of the home. Disciplining children is not done in the form of spanking, but by verbal or non-verbal contact. The father has ongoing contact with his son but is not allowed to play with his daughter after a certain age. This prevents sexual abuse.

Also the father and son are never allowed to expose themselves in the presence of women.

As a sign of affection the father will rub his son's legs or chest. This is also a sign to wish the child a good day and if the father is going away for the day he will also tell the boy to take care of his mother.

In order to give the child a sense of responsibility, respect and pride (as an ongoing process through their growing years) the practice of choosing a "mock" adult partner for the child is done. For a little boy a mock wife will be chosen and for a little girl a mock husband will be chosen.

Now I would like to step out of the tradition to see what has happened, what has caused us to go away from what was.

Since the days of the fur traders a lot of change has happened among the Indian nation. The introduction to alcohol and guns took away the pride that once existed. For example, killing an animal was looked on as a very sacred adventure. Using the bow and arrow meant that a lot of planning and care went into a hunting expedition. This gave a sense of pride and respect.

After fur traders there was the introduction of residential school and reserves.

When Lucie Richardson was talking about the residential schools on the military base, I found it very similar to my experience at residential school for the natives. We had demerits and merits and AWOLs and all those kinds of things that are like being in the military. It brought back a lot of memories for me because I too am a subject of the residential schools.

When the residential school came into the picture children were removed from the home. The women were confronted with a new religion and their role in the community seemed less important.

Due to all these quick changes the women could not cope. Therefore they turned to alcohol, drugs and more abuse started to happen. Family dynamics were changed and damaged. The children would come home to an alcoholic mother and the environment was no longer familiar to them.

Broken promises and the signing of the Treaty caused a lack of trust in the white system. The potlach and some of the cultural and traditional ways were not allowed to be practiced.

In the Yukon we do not have reserves. Treaties were never signed. It is divided into bands and/or communities. I mention the Yukon because that is where I am from. I came down from Whitehorse.

There is a difference between living in a community and living out of a community. Living in the community no longer has the bond it once had, but there are certain things that are still practiced. Living away from the community Indian people experience cultural shock and due to a lack of awareness it is very hard for them to adjust and cope with the sudden change. There is no sharing, a lack of acceptance and no family bond. The family breakdown is more common and caring is less common.

Previously there was a closer net or bond within the community and because of this bonding there was a positive attitude of resolution which tended to minimize any dispute which arose. People did not want to be negative towards each other. Today children tend to be neglected or abandoned due to the lack of awareness about city living.

Traditional practice on the reserve do not continue in the city and some non-traditional practices cause problems on the reserve. We are now facing the political influence which tends to create division within the reserve.

The idea of a reserve and the non-traditional forms of self-government are a couple of ways which takes away from the Indian culture, cultural and traditional practice. We as Indian people are now looking at different ways of incorporating some of the traditional ways back into our daily living.

The trauma that residential school, fur traders and reserves brought upon us is still affecting us to this day. Through self-awareness we are becoming aware of the inner pain and anger and subsequently are learning how to deal with it. The inner fire -- and I am talking about the inner fire as our spirit within us -- that was once a part of our tradition has been lost for many years. It is now time to rekindle and reclaim this fire in order for us to grow spiritually, mentally, emotionally and physically.

The personal healing is being done through self-help support groups, workshops, counselling -- and that would mean alcohol counselling, drug counselling, personal or family counselling -- communication, awareness education, sweat lodge and using sacred items such as sage and sweet grass. Through these methods of self-awareness and self-improvements the Indian people can once again reclaim their heritage of pride and accomplishment.

There is a saying that was passed on from generation to generation, that is "I must give of myself". The Indian people believe this practice would help the betterment of our

people. We as parents also have "great parents." These are the creator and mother earth. This gives us our holistic way of teaching which encompasses the spiritual, physical, emotional and mental. It provides peace and harmony to the social wellbeing of the community.

Thank you.

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR:

Q. We all want and need a sense of security of life if we are going to flourish as individuals and I think it has been recognized that mothering is a trait, a character trait that enables a person to create an atmosphere and an environment that gives that sense of safety and protection that people need, an ability to create a place in the busy world where someone, whether they are a child or an adult, can feel a sense of love and get the nurturance that they need.

And to Jan Kinney I would like to say that I think you have been blessed with an ability to mother and that is something that the whole world needs.

A. **Lorraine Stick:** Well, with the Bill C-31 that has just been out recently I think that if you do marry someone non-status you do not have to lose your rights. That should never have been but it was there. Ten (10) years ago if I had married someone that was non-status I would have automatically lost my status. But I do not believe that anyone should give up any kind of rights, whether you are Indian or not Indian, when you get married. So that is changing.

Q. Lorraine, I spent some time in Moosonee, Fort Albany and Attawapiskat, and the reservation at Fort Albany, when I first went there absolutely shocked me. I could not believe what I was seeing where the homes, really from the outside appeared to be total shacks. Some of them are so tiny, they are merely boards and cardboard. Being up there in February when it was minus 40 degrees and you see them trying to bring in wood is shuddering. Part of the reservation has no water whatsoever. When the river is frozen in that section they go down and cut a hole and pail out the water for themselves.

Attawapiskat is pretty similar. Why is that such an attractive way of life. We cannot, in our environment, understand why that is such an acceptable way of living. The pollution alone by the river in the winter, the pollution sits six feet high on the top of the river. In Moosonee pollution is appalling and one wonders why you would choose to live that way. Can you comment on that, please?

A. **Lorraine Stick:** I must say that we did not choose to live there. It is not by choice that we are there. We were forced to be there, you know, on that reserve.

Traditionally many years ago we believed that this land belonged to mother earth. This land that we walk on, it belonged to mother earth so therefore it does not belong to any particular person or people or even group of people. We as Indian people did not own the earth, you know. We respect it. We had a lot of pride and a lot of respect because mother earth provided us with many, many

things, like lots of food. And when the signing of the treaties came in that was when reserves were brought in. So that areas were set aside by, I guess it was by the British, saying that that was the area we must live. That is why we are still there to this day. It is not really by choice.

But we are really working towards betterment for ourselves and our own people by making some changes, you know. Working towards self-government is one of them. And whether we would like to have another government or not, it is not really sense of self-government, it is self-betterment, I guess, for our community. So that maybe one day we do not have to live in a reserve or in area that we did not choose. I hope that answers your question.

Q. The description that you gave us, Lucie, of life on a military base left me with the impression that the marriage breakdown rate ought to be pretty high. I think in the British experience that is a particular problem. What does the military do to prevent marriages and families from breaking up, if anything, and is it a particular problem in Canada?

A. **Lucie Richardson:** The military in Canada has done very few studies on military families, and that includes the divorce rate, so I cannot tell you. There are some studies coming out of the United States showing that in fact military families, for the length of military service, are actually staying together at a higher rate than other families. But they do not go on to say that mainly it is because the men are away and women learn that very soon this person is going to be gone. And so the coming and going allows you to maintain the status quo.

What I am finding happens then is once the mid-life career change or what is called retirement occurs, then marriages break down. And I might add that it is at a time when women are probably at their most vulnerable age in terms of support, pension, education, all those sorts of things.

As far as what the military is doing, I do not see a whole lot, but we need to put on pressure. There is a woman in Halifax right now who was awarded her husband's pension, the full pension. She was married for 35 years and raised four children while he was in the navy, which means he was gone probably three-quarters of the time. The government will not give her that cheque in her name, it has to go to him and then she has to rely on his good graces to give it to her. Because they are divorced if he dies she no longer gets it because it is cut off completely. So those kinds of things really have to be examined.

Q. What are the fears of older women?

A. **Janine O'Leary Cobb:** If I talk about the fears of older women it would take probably the rest of the afternoon.

For women between the ages of, say, 50 and 65 I think that their greatest fear is "what am I going to do with the rest of my life" especially for women who do not have a career. I think the major problem is that we lack role models. We do have Joan Collins, Elizabeth Taylor, you know.

It is a very difficult thing but I think it is changing. I think it is changing because women are becoming more assertive and standing up and saying "So I am 50, so what." But I think there is, in North American society, generally a terrible fear of aging and the fear that we can only deal with by confronting it. And so when I say our newsletter is for menopausal and mid-life women that is a very large part of it. The whole concern about aging is very much mixed up with notions of menopause.

Q. I would like to respond to that too. I am 59 years old and my fear is not what am I going to do with my life but how am I going to survive. My fears are of poverty, having to go to a doctor, maybe ending up in an old age home, getting food from day to day. I think we have to start being honest about what the real fears are. Fear of violence, you know.

A. Real too. I mean, we do not imagine them. I think we are all terrified of becoming bag ladies, really.

Q. My question is directed to Janine. You indicated when you were speaking to us that of your five children you stayed home with the first three and with the last two you were not at home full time as a mother and that you did not find there way any difference. As a mother who has chosen to stay at home with my children because I do feel it makes a difference I would like you to expand on that, please.

A. **Janine O'Leary Cobb:** I think that if I arranged my now grown children in a row and asked you to pick out which of them had been mothered full time by someone inside the house and someone who was working full time you would have a difficult time choosing one from the other. And I do not think that they perceive there is any difference in the relationship I have with them.

I think that for me there was a critical point at which I needed to get back into the workforce for myself. That was something that I had to evaluate. I think too that I was very influenced by Anne Oakley's work, the titles of which I think are **The Sociology of Housework** and **Subject Women.** These analyze the role of mother and the role of housekeeper. And I made just a brief allusion to the fact that although we like to think we are there for our children all the time in many ways I think I, and many other women who stay home all the time, spend an inordinant amount of time keeping the house clean. Once you are out working full time your standards of

cleanliness drop alarmingly, or at least very noticeably.

I tell you in the spring when the spring semester was over I would look around and think "What a slum this place is." but I had not noticed that because when I was out teaching my concern was to come home and spend time with the children. I think that really we spend as much time with our children working full time inside the house as we do when we work full time outside the house.

And I think also that those who think feminism has trivialized the role of housewife were not around before the resurgence of feminism in the '60s because in the '50s as a housewife you felt like nothing. Something I lived with for a long time. Feminism helped me to feel very proud of being a full time mother and it has helped me to feel very proud of being a full time college teacher, now a full time editor and publisher.

But I think too to assume that because a mother is in the house full time that the child is necessarily getting better quality care can be an erroneous assumption, not necessarily is, but can be.

C. **Lucie Richardson:** I would also like to comment on that, although the question was not addressed to me.

I stayed at home full time with my five children until two years ago and I experienced a lot of joy in doing that, in being with the children. But I would say Amen to the amount of time that I spent cleaning and the time that I spent cleaning was drudgery and I did not enjoy that. And I might add I also baked bread, ground my own wheat and did all the nice things that we are expected to do and I enjoyed some of that.

But since I have been out for two years going to school I do find that my children appreciate me more when I am there. They have learned to be more independent than they were when I was home all the time and their relationship with their father, who is now doing most of the cooking and the cleaning while I have been at school, has increased tremendously as well. So they now have more contact with both of their parents in a very real way that they did not have before.

Q. Lucie, I am directing my question to you as a military wife.

I am 27 years a military wife. There are some things that we differ very greatly on. Maybe I was a little older or maybe I felt differently than you did. When I married a man in the service I knew I was marrying a man who was disciplined and that certain things I would have to accept regardless. I brought up seven children and we moved from base to base, but I think one of the problems with many service wives is the fact that they do not make, of wherever they are, a home. It is merely a place until the next place.

I do not disagree with you comments on separation. Separation I feel for a military wife is very difficult. They are making strides, and I am very well aware of the London base, which has brought in a female to work with the families, particularly in coping with separation and things like that. For 15 years at the air base Centralia I was very involved with the families on the base, encouraging them to move out into civilian life as well and also bringing outside families into the base to share many things which were different.

I think being in the military we must accept the fact there is a discipline for the husband's life at certain times and he must be prepared to accept it. And we as women begin to understand and to learn that there is a discipline which we cannot change no matter how much we want to change. We fought for housing where women were left behind sometimes for 12 months. Women themselves in the military have to realize that some changes only they can make.

And as far as the 50 -- 47-52 years of age, I think the men have a problem, particularly coming out of the military. They should be screaming discrimination at being retired in full health at 45 and 47 years of age.

I did not feel a lot of the pain, obviously, that you feel and I know I have talked to some of the women and I did not want the day to go by and go home without at least speaking to the fact that military life is a different life. Thank you, Lucie, for your presentation.

A. **Lucie Richardson:** There was a lot said there. I think after having spent 20 years on about seven or eight different military bases, having not come previously from a military family I was not totally aware of what was going to be required.

I think the difference is once we tried to do something the military authorities were very rigid. We wrote letters as far up as the Minister of National Defence and he said "Thank you, girls. We are looking after it. Don't worry about it." I think the difference is now that although there are good things, there are a lot of things that still need to be improved. Women now want to have a hand across the country in a national way with making the decisions that go into their lives. In our husband's work lives they have to look after themselves and what they want there they have to decide. But I tried to make a definite distinction between the operational side of the military base and the residential side of the base that affects me and my children and their type of schooling and my life after the military.

And I think also that there is a definite syndrome that occurs to men who are able-bodied and it is their time to leave the military, leave the security and the dependency that exists there. It starts about five years before they start doing that. A lot of guilt is now being placed on women to make them accept the responsibility

for these men through that period of time when they are also going through those times of crises as well and making the adjustment to civilian life.

And so I suppose if we accept the assumption that we have to have a military then the men themselves are going to have to accept that discipline, and if they do not like it they will have to do something about it themselves. What we are working on is the effects that that has on women and children and making the best of it and not just accepting the fact that that is the way it is and that is what we have to live with.

SANDRA KERR

Acting President,
The Ontario Advisory Council on Women's Issues

Thank you very much. We are drawing to a close, but before we do I would like to invite our final speaker to make some comments on what she has heard over the last two days, as well as on the future of motherhood.

Doris Anderson was born and raised in Calgary, Alberta. After graduating from the University of Alberta she came to Toronto and after a number of jobs in copyrighting, radio script writing and advertising she took a job at **Chatelaine** magazine where within seven years she was editor, a position she held for 20 years. Her hard-hitting editorial direction established Chatelaine as a leading voice for Canadian women.

In 1979 she was appointed President of the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women in Ottawa, a body whose function is to give advice on women's issues to the federal government.

From 1982 to 1984 she was President of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, a well-known volunteer lobby group, some of whom you have heard speak today. She has also served on many boards and commissions, including the National Conference on Confederation, the Canadian Institute on Public Affairs, the Canadian Film Development Corporation, Board of Governors of York University, of Macmillan Publishing Company, of Maclean-Hunter Publishing Company and of the Metropolitan Children's Aid Society.

She is presently a trustee of the Institute on Public Policy and a recently appointed member of the Judicial Council of Ontario.

She has also written. She has written three novels and has just finished her third one **Affairs of State.** She is currently planning her fourth on working women.

She is an Officer of the Order of Canada, a member of the News Hall of Fame, a recipient of the 1983 Y Awards for Women of Distinction and the Constance E. Hamilton Award for the City of Toronto.

I would suggest to Janine she might be a very good role model for older women. Please welcome Doris Anderson.

DORIS ANDERSON

Columnist
Toronto Star

Thank you very much. I have been listening with great interest to what everybody had to say about motherhood because having raised three children who are now great big strapping men I am still puzzled about how to do it. And I think a lot of people in the audience have differing points of view and I think that we did come to some conclusions and certainly have thrown some light on the whole subject.

The family, as we know it or we think we know it, is under a kind of siege all over the world and I often wonder whether it was ever as good as we think it was. When I look through my own family album and those rather grim-faced people, usually the man sitting there with his gold watch chain across the front and the woman standing to the side with her hand on the chair and the sons ranged around, and the daughters sitting at a lower level somewhere, it does not look like a real happy looking group. And I think Jessie Bernard, an American Professor, put it very well. She said "The reason those old families look so great and the marriages lasted so well and they fill us full of such guilt because we cannot do it the same way is because everybody died at 50." And there was no way to get out of it.

In a book called **For Better, For Worse**, which was a history of marriage by a Professor John Gillis at Rutgers University, he pointed out that in the past far fewer people married at all. Marriage was a privilege. People went to work at 11 or 12 and they only were allowed to marry in the community if they could demonstrate that they could support a family. It was a very effective way of birth control. The man had to demonstrate that he had a craft, usually did not marry until he was well on into his 20s, (or that he owned land) and then he looked around for a sensible, strong, hard working, talented wife, because marriage in those days was not really falling in love to the latest hit tune or rock tune, it was a very solidly based business.

The man needed the woman very much to do the cooking, not just cooking and cleaning but to weave cloth, make clothes, look after chickens, collect eggs. I had two grandmothers like that. And above all what men needed women for was to produce a large family because they needed many, many hands to do the work on a farm. And they also needed people to look after parents in their old age.

Well, I do not think anybody in this room is under any illusion that their children are going to be looking after them in their old age. Sometimes I wonder if I am still going to be looking after my three sons in my old age, which is rapidly approaching.

So today we marry for quite different reasons, we marry because we are looking for a warm, close, wonderful relationship that will last all of our lives, an ongoing

conversation, an ongoing dialogue where we do not continually have to be explaining ourselves. And it is remarkable to me that it lasts as well as it does with those expectations because people change. We live in a very changeable society.

And the big change that came in the family came after this agrarian period where it was quite clear people married because they had very solid economic reasons for doing it. The big change came in the industrial revolution when both men and women went into the factories. And it soon became apparent this was not working out very well because there was nobody at home looking after children. Disease was widespread, conditions in the burgeoning cities was appalling.

And somebody got the brilliant idea that it would be a good thing to persuade women to stay home and look after the home and the family better and the men would earn the money. And the women rebelled. They did not want to do this at all. They could see the disadvantages of being totally dependant upon men.

But that is what happened and women were squeezed out of the work force except in minor roles. So this role of the man as the breadwinner and the woman as the homemaker in the home is a recent role and we consider it somehow as the norm. As John Gillis points out in his book, the Victorian father who is the head of the family, the paternalist source of all justice and rightness in the family, with the mother quietly in the background looking after everybody is a very recent and relatively dull invention.

The next big change in the family came in the 1960s when people started to live together and not bother to marry at all because the old reason for marrying was not nearly as strong. Many people chose to live together. They did not particularly want children and therefore they saw no real reason for marrying. And I think that still goes on, many people do live together and do not choose to marry until they decide to make a stronger commitment and have children. Many people do not even bother to marry when they do have children. In Britain today one out of five parents of children are unmarried by choice.

The problem with this change in attitude towards marriage and the family is the by-product, which are the children. There were great, strong sensible reasons for having children in the old days when everybody was on a farm and people needed a lot of hands to do the work, but today children are an enormous financial and emotional commitment. And I firmly believe that only people who really are committed to doing that job well and really know they can do it well -- and that does not mean at 16 or 17 or 18 -- should be doing it.

And it also leaves the woman, the person who has the children, very, very vulnerable. If at any time the other partner decides to leave or through accident is killed or dies the women, if she has no other alternative and if she is not working she is immediately on welfare.

And I was amazed recently to see on the front page of one of the daily papers a large picture of a 15 year old boy who had become a father for the second time at 15 years of age and with two different mothers each time. And there he was. He was scarcely rid of his baby fat himself and here his big achievement, the reason he was featured on the front page of a daily newspaper was he had fathered two children at the age of 15 from two different women. I thought it was an appalling message to be giving to young people of our time, that this was some sort of remarkable achievement, to be so irresponsible as to have fathered two children before you were out of childhood yourself.

And, of course, we do give that message. We give that message to young people, particularly to girls. We are still giving them the same message, through movies, through television, through commercials, through all the rock songs. The solution to the world is in finding Mr. Right and having children. I think the world is a formidable place, particularly for girls, because they know there is a time clock ticking away there and before the age of 40 they have to establish themselves in some kind of a job where they can support themselves, they have to find this Mr. Right, whoever that is, and they have to have children. It is not so for boys. Boys know that the most important thing for them is to find a job, and they can go on having children until they are 90, (and some of them do).

But it is a very, I think, intimidating thing for girls and often they seem to think the easiest thing to do is get on with the one thing that is easy, and that is get married and have a baby. And it is just about the worse they can do if they do it too young because it shuts off so many other options for them, and yet it is so hard to get that message across to our young people with all that flood of information urging them to do it a different way.

Actually, in our society we prepare our kids to work at the Burger King or read gas meters far better than we tell them how to be parents. In 1982 in the Province of Ontario the Family Court Judges were so appalled at the sheer ignorance of people appearing in courts, usually quite young people, who did not know how to look after children properly, did not know how to feed a baby, did not know how to supply children with proper nutrition or what time they should be going to bed or even getting them to school on time, that they -- the Family Court Judges suggested that a report be made.

And a report was made and the finding of the report was that adolescents in Ontario were woefully uninformed about life skills, that family education in schools was too little and too late and that other countries were doing a far better job.

And one of the main reasons we do not have good family education in Canada and in Ontario and other provinces is because there is still a lot of opposition from parents, not so much now since the advent of AIDS, but the attitude of a fairly small number of parents is "I do not want anybody telling my children anything about family, raising children, and particularly about sex except myself." The problem is those parents do not talk to their children about sex. They

do not tell them about sex. They have the idea that if they do not tell them anything they will not become curious and they will not experiment. Nothing could be further from reality.

In Sweden where they start sex education in the early grades in the school, Sweden has the lowest teenage pregnancy rate in the world. In Alberta and Saskatchewan, where that attitude of "Tell them nothing" pervades, they have one of the highest teenage pregnancy rates in North America. And in Ontario family life courses are an option. They do not have to be taken, they are not part of the curriculum.

Very few boys, for example, take family life courses. They have to be lured, I was told by a teacher, into the course by being told that they are going to learn how to sew a hockey bag or some other pretext like this to try and get them in there. The people who teach family life courses are often people who have a spare and they are not particularly qualified for that course, and the budgets are miserly. But the good thing about it is the children who take those courses, particularly the girls, find that at a very crucial and often trying time in their lives, which is adolescence, they learn a great deal and it is a very rewarding course.

In Canada that is one thing that we could do and we are not doing adequately. Denmark, Sweden, Germany, the United Kingdom are all doing a much better job in family life courses and preparing young people for the kind of lives that they are going to be leading.

The feminist movement has been a response to all these changes that have taken place in the lives of people, particularly women and children, but it has not been responsible for what has happened to the lives. All these things, the industrial revolution, moving off the land, the sexual revolution of the '60s were not the invention of the feminist movement. The feminist movement has tried to respond and put pressure on governments to deal with what is happening in our society and to help people cope with these new problems that have come along.

The feminist movement certainly does not see a solution in trying to turn back the clock to the way things were before. They do see a solution, a solution for everybody, not just for the good of women, but for the good of everybody, children and man, in sharing the responsibility and the power much more evenly than we have in the past.

In 1960 I published what I believe is one of the first stories in North America on battered children. This was actually appearing, this story, in tiny little pieces all over the papers, in little bits in the back of the paper about children being murdered, children being beaten to death, children being burned by their own parents. And as a new mother myself I could not believe this was going on in our society. I thought we are taking better care of dogs and cats than we are of our own children. I ran that story in Chatelaine about battered children and I got an absolute avalanche of mail from readers who said I was being sensational. We did not want to believe

that was going on in Canada.

Of course, two years later we had to accept the fact that there were many children battered in our society and we had to start to do something about it. And it was the women's movement who identified that sexual harassment and child sexual abuse was going on in the family and we had to face it. It was not a new thing. Battered women, sexual abuse in the family have been going on for centuries. It is the women's movement who dropped the gong on it and said "It is time this stopped. This is a bad thing. We cannot be hypocritical about it anymore. We have got to face it. We have got to clean it up."

And in each case this has been a response to a need. We want a better way of running things, we want a better life for people, we want children to be safe in the home from predators, whether they happen to be uncles, brothers, fathers or whoever.

The women's movement has, of course, been fighting for equality in the work-place. When you think of it why should people not be paid fair wages for work of equal value? Why should a daycare nursery work with three years of university be paid less than the man that feeds the penguins at the Metropolitan Zoo? You know, when you think of it that way it is ludicrous. It is a very, very skilled and demanding job to be a child care worker and feeding penguins at the zoo is not a skilled job, so why should the penguin feeder get more than the daycare worker? Well, we all know the answer, it is because women have been doing those kinds of jobs forever for free, and therefore they are devalued. So the whole movement to pay women equal pay for work of equal value is an effort to give women recognition, and the jobs that women do the recognition and the pay that they deserve.

The women's movement has worked very hard to get more women in our Legislatures, in our municipal councils, in the House of Commons. We are still, I think, seriously disadvantaged in the two power bases in our society: politics and business. We now have one out of 10 members of the House of Commons a woman. That is the best we have ever done, and it is a fluke. In the last election the Conservatives thought they were probably not going to win very many seats in Quebec, which had been a traditional Liberal stronghold, and so they ran a lot of women in Quebec. And lo and behold Quebec turned Conservative for a change. So we did much better in the last election in the House of Commons.

But the problem always is to get women good seats, good winnable seats, and the gate keepers, the people who run the nominations are men. And when they think they are going to win, as the Liberal Party thinks it is going to win a number of seats in Toronto in this coming election, the fights and the dirty tricks and the name calling is absolutely fierce and the rush and trampling to get those seats pushes most women right out of the picture entirely. And, of course, there is no limit on the amount of money that can be spent at a nomination meeting.

Women have fought to get more women in the courts of this country. I think that it is significant that the Supreme Court of Canada, which in over 50 years of major decisions, i.e. the **Person's** case, the **Irene Murdoch** case, the **Bliss** case, in none of those cases did the Supreme Court help women. The Supreme Court could have covered itself with glory as an enlightened court. It covered itself with barnacles as a very unenlightened court and we had to, in some cases even go to the Privy Council in England to have those decisions overturned.

I think it is significant that the recent decision in January on the abortion issue, which was brought down by the Supreme Court, was a favorable decision in my opinion for women. Simply said, the Court ruled that according to the law every woman in this country is supposed to be able to have access to a safe therapeutic abortion and if she does not that should be corrected. And the fact that we now have two women out of the nine Justices on the Supreme Court of Canada I think has something to do with that decision.

Women are making much more progress in business, but the number of women in top jobs is still quite small. But women are wonderful, they are very resilient. About a third to a half of the students in business administration now are women, and when they cannot get anywhere and they are hitting a glass ceiling in those big corporations they decided to do something else. And 10 years ago only one in ten new businesses was started by a woman, now it is almost over half the new businesses that are being started by women. Women are going into business for themselves and they are being very successful at it. So if they cannot do it one way they do it another.

As for the future, the future of motherhood, the future of the family it is quite clear that in spite of Bourassa's baby bribe, $500 for the first two children and $3,000 for the next, no matter how many you have, is not going to be successful. In fact it is an insult. It would not keep a baby in Pampers, let alone look after all the costs of raising children today and putting them through school. And the thing that is ridiculous about it is that it has been tried and tried. All over Europe, France, Germany, all the major European countries have tried bribing women to have more babies or, in the case of the iron curtain countries, making it very difficult for women to get birth control information or abortions. And none of it works.

The federal government had another scheme that they were suggesting back in March. They were going to import orphans and large families from the Third World to Canada. And, of course, that does not work either because the minute people begin to prosper and women get better education they can see the advantages of having smaller families and educating and doing more for the children. So they have fewer children and they try to help them more. None of those schemes work.

What does work is better family allowances, more flexible maternity leave, better daycare, all the things that help a family have children and not be a drain on people.

Another big problem that I think we should all be very much aware of, and we learned about that yesterday afternoon on the panel on infertility, is that we are moving very quickly technologically into all kinds of ways of producing children. If we women do not keep hold of that we could become baby producing receptacles. We must insist that there be a thorough discussion of these technologies and that laws be passed after we have discussed them in great detail. We Canadians are very good at that. We are good at having Royal Commissions, we are good at presenting briefs, we are good at discussing these things. And the Canadian way is to thoroughly discuss it and then pass some laws about it. We may not always agree on the laws that are passed, but that is the way we do things and we certainly should be doing something about this. We should insist on a Royal Commission. There is a group of women's organizations that are pushing for that very much. We must thoroughly look into the kinds of things that could happen with all this new technology and decide how we want to deal with it. And I think that unless women do that we are going to lose control of one of the most important functions that any woman ever has, and that is the ability to have children.

In the future I think we are certainly going to be moving towards more women working. The women joining the work force is the biggest source of new workers in Canada and has been for some time. By the turn of the century women will form almost half of the workers in this country. And, of course, with all the new technology many, many jobs that used to be considered male jobs are now fully open to women. There is no reason at all why a woman cannot run the big construction equipment, the big equipment in forestry products. It takes skill and attention and responsibility and women have all those qualities in great abundance.

So the ultimate aim of the women's movement is more choice. And all this weekend we have moved back and forth between women who clearly are very committed and believe the only way they would be comfortable in raising their children is to be at home with them, particularly when they are small, and other women who are just as committed in believing that their children have not suffered, their children are independent, well-rounded people and it was not necessary for them to be in the home.

I think those decisions are best made by individual people. There is no one way to do anything and I think that we should all accept that, that my way of doing it and your way of doing it may not be the same, but certainly what we do believe and think we know is our own children and our own circumstances and what is best for us. And I think what the women's movement is aiming to do is give all of us the possibility and the choice to do that.

And never before have parents needed more help. It is quite clear that we have children, of course, because we love them, we have children because we want to throw something into the future, we want to feel that what we started is going to continue. We have children for all kinds of reasons. But

financially and emotionally and in terms of time children are an enormous drain on people today and people need all the help they can get.

Ultimately who benefits from people having children is the country. Nobody today thinks that we are going to be supported by our children. We do not have children because we think we are going to be trading sugar across the back fence. Children scatter all over the world. They do not stay at home, they do not visit you everyday. They do not even call you everyday, and they should not, but we have children because it is a terrific experience. It was one of the most wonderful things that ever happened to me. Certainly, compared to editing a magazine and a lot of other things I have done, they were nothing to having a child, particularly the first time. It got a little boring by the third, but it was a wonderful experience and a humbling experience. And I never cease to learn from my children. But the ultimate beneficiary is the country. So the country, the state, has to help parents more. There is no questioning this.

And it has been very, very mingy. An awful lot of lip service is given in this country, particularly by this present government, to the sanctity of motherhood and the family. In the latest budget, they really made things much worse, particularly for the middle class family. On daycare their plan is woefully inadequate, considering that there is only space in Canada today for one child out of 12 who need good daycare. And it is so ridiculously shortsighted, because if we do not look after children as well as we can, if we have increasing numbers of children being raised in poverty, which is the case in this rich country of ours today, we are going to pay for it later on with children, with people that are damaged, with people that are unhealthy, with people who have not been given the best start in life that they could be.

And I think those are things that women are very much aware of and women are working very hard to change. And so all of the long grocery lists of what the women's movement is working for, better pay, better pension, adequate child support and all those things are very much on the agenda of the women's movement.

We must somehow get across to our young people that being parents is a wonderful experience but it is not a substitute for lack of love in your own life, that you should only enter and take on that responsibility when you are absolutely sure that you are an adult yourself. And that is one of the biggest challenges I think we have to get across in our schools. I think one absolutely easy way to do it is to have much better family education in the schools.
Another thing is not all men are fathers. Men often just stumble into fatherhood. They get married and somehow children follow after you get married. The woman wants children and he has never really even considered whether he likes children or not. And it is a fact in our society that violent, irresponsible men have more children than men who are nurturing and men who take their responsibilities very seriously, and I think that should be changed.

It is clear now that there are many different kinds of families. There is the traditional family; there is the two income family; there are families where people have been married to other people and they are now married to each other and there is a mix of children; there are single parent families; there are people who choose to have children, feel very dedicated to the idea of having children and not at all dedicated to the idea of marriage, and I do not see anything wrong with that either. We have for years admired widows and single parents who raise children on their own. I do not see any reason why somebody cannot decide "I will have this child and I will do as good a job as I can possibly do."

Far from being responsible for the changes that have happened in our society I think the women's movement is working to respond to those changes and we have been working to do that because women have been on the cutting edge of the changes that have happened. We have had to cope with them.

I think the first speaker on Friday morning put it very well when she said that men are always a little bit afraid of women and they certainly should be. Primitive men were afraid because they could not understand this incredible phenomena that women could produce children. Once they figured out how all that happened it really scared them and they thought "We have got to get control of this."

It is true, of course, that women can do incredible things, particularly when women really get their backs to the wall. The government tried to cancel a conference in 1981 that the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women -- when I was President -- was going to hold on the Charter and women in this country got themselves to Ottawa in large numbers to debate the whole issue. A lot of them did not know what the Charter was until they got to Ottawa, but they figured it out pretty quickly. They decided what they wanted in a Charter, and Canadian women did what the American women have been trying to do since 1923, they got a clause on the equality of men and women in our Charter of Rights where the American women in the ERA failed. The American women are still reeling with astonishment at what we accomplished. Women can do incredible things when they set their minds to it.

So I think women must not look backwards, they must look forwards. I like to think if we had more women in the House of Commons instead of we would really have good child care, instead of building a dome stadium, or we really would clean up Lake Ontario instead of talking about it forever. I think we would have pensions for homemakers tomorrow and maybe abolish the Senate. I think we would have better housing for families, and forget entirely about those 12 nuclear subs that are going to cost so much money. I think we would have maternity leave, good maternity leave and good training for women so that they could get back into the work force. If we can do that for men who spend time in the army why can we not do the same thing for women who take time out to raise children? Why can we not make certain that they do not lose by doing that important job?

And I am often asked, sometimes, most often by men, "Well, what about men? What about affirmative action for men?" I have no problem with that. There has been a very good affirmative action program going for men for the last 2,000 years and I think we have a bit of catching up to do. And when 90 per cent of the House of Commons are women, and 95 per cent of all the judges and the courts are women, and when six out of seven appointments that the federal government and the provincial governments makes are made for women, then I will be one of the first people to work for affirmative action for men.

So in conclusion I simply want to say that I believe that the future of mothers and children and men in this country of ours will be good as long as we do not become afraid and start fighting one another. Because I believe the women's movement is a social revolution as important at least as the industrial revolution. And I think that the reason it is not acknowledged as a revolution of that immensity is simply because it is a revolution that has to go on in each of us in our relationship with the people that we love and live with the most. It is a revolution where we are not marching on the Bastille, we are not cutting off anyone's head, we are just trying to change society day by day into a better place for everyone, men, women and children.

Thank you very much.

QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS FROM THE FLOOR:

C. Referring to Bourassa's baby bribe, as you call it I do not see a state, what I see is a public person. It is my money that is in there. I don't think that Quebec is bribing women by giving money to them when they have children. To call it a bribe is an insult to my willingness to accept my own money being handed back to me so that I can use it to care for my own family. I know there is a mentality of "I will pay you to have a baby," but I do not think that we can accuse our politicians and our social welfare systems of having that mentality when they are doing something good for people.

A. **Doris Anderson:** Well, I guess my problem with it is I do not think it is good enough by a long shot. I think it is a quick fit and I still call it a bribe. It looks good. I was on a phone-in show, I was actually on two phone-in shows soon after that happened and not a single woman, they were all homemakers, all people at home who phoned, thought that would ever induce them to have a child. They simply said it was insulting. It is not enough money. The only people that might be tempted to have a child for $500 or even $3,000 would be very young people or large, very poor families.

There were a couple of other things in the Bourassa budget. One was a $7,000 grant to help people buy their first home. Now, that is really helpful, although $7,000 today is not going to help many people put a down payment on a home because there are not very many homes, certainly in Ontario and Metro where $7,000 would go very far on a down payment. But I think was a more useful to do and it got almost no publicity.

Q. I am personally very sensitive to the role that the media plays in helping parents or hindering their work.

I wonder in that context if you would comment on your position on Bill C-54, the proposed changes to the Criminal Code on Pornography. Do you think women and/or parents should be lobbying for second reading or do you agree with the civil libertarian position that it should be tossed out entirely?

A. **Doris Anderson:** Well, as a member of the media, of course, I am against censorship. That, however, is a bad Bill and there are sections in it I think could very easily be changed so that it would be acceptable.

I have great difficulty with my friends in the media and the civil libertarians. I was on the board of the Civil Liberties Association for many years. I think that our traditional way of doing things in this country is to pass some laws that say "This is unacceptable in our society, this violence and hate towards women." And then people begin to understand that this must be stopped and maybe one or two books or magazines are going to get caught in the undertow and have to be defended in court.

That does not bother me particularly because I think pornography right now has gone far too far on this continent.

What we keep forgetting is that the Scandinavian countries, where 20 years ago pornography was wide open, have now put in some very strict regulations. There is no pornography on television, all print pornography has to be sold in special stores and it is not available to kids. And, you know, I do not see that is such a big problem. I get very irritated at these people who say there must be no restrictions at all, we are fighting for freedom of speech. Baloney. I agree that we need a Bill, but I think that that Bill needs some changes. There is a clause in it, and I cannot recall it exactly, but a clause that refers to nursing mothers and all sorts of things that are not considered, in my opinion and most other people's opinion really, to be pornography. That seems ridiculous to me and a lot of other people and I think those things could easily be removed.

I spent one whole winter chairing a committee in Metro on trying to work out a definition of pornography so that we could give very firm direction to the government on this issue. I think that the definition of violent pornography against women and children is what we want to get rid of. Okay?

C. In other words, then, I think I hear you saying that although it is a bad Bill as it is, it is a working Bill and that in second reading the kinds of improvements you would like to see could be made, but it is a case of throwing the baby out with the bath water if we lose it and start all over again with some other unknown product?

C. **Doris Anderson:** Well, it is just that it takes so long to formulate any Bill, and right now I do not think this government is going to pass any bill before an election.